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# The World's Classics

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SELECTED POEMS OF  
BYRON

OXFORD  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

AMEN HOUSE, E.C. 4  
London Edinburgh Glasgow New York  
Toronto Melbourne Capetown Bombay  
Calcutta Madras

HUMPHREY MILFORD

PUBLISHER TO THE  
UNIVERSITY



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# Selected Poems of BYRON



OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS  
LONDON : HUMPHREY MILFORD

# A. S. College.

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

Born, London . . . . . January 22, 1788  
Died, Missolonghi, Greece : : : April 19, 1824

*The present selection of Byron's poems was first published in 'The World's Classics' in 1913 and reprinted in 1923, 1924, 1928, 1931 and 1936.*

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acc no 89

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# POEMS

## LACHIN Y GAIR

AWAY, ye gay landscapes, ye gardens of roses !  
In you let the minions of luxury rove ;  
Restore me the rocks, where the snow-flake reposes,  
Though still they are sacred to freedom and love :  
Yet, Caledonia, beloved are thy mountains,  
Round their white summits though elements war ;  
Though cataracts foam 'stead of smooth-flowing foun-  
tains,  
I sigh for the valley of dark Loch na Garr.

Ah ! there my young footsteps in infancy wander'd ;  
My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was the plaid ;  
On chieftains long perish'd my memory ponder'd, 11  
As daily I strode through the pine-cover'd glade ;  
I sought not my home till the day's dying glory  
Gave place to the rays of the bright polar star ;  
For fancy was cheer'd by traditional story,  
Disclosed by the natives of dark Loch na Garr.

" Shades of the dead ! have I not heard your voices  
Rise on the night-rolling breath of the gale ? "  
Surely the soul of the hero rejoices, 19  
And rides on the wind, o'er his own Highland vale.  
Round Loch na Garr while the stormy mist gathers,  
Winter presides in his cold icy car :  
Clouds there encircle the forms of my fathers ;  
They dwell in the tempests of dark Loch na Garr.

" Ill-starr'd, though brave, did no visions foreboding  
Tell you that fate had forsaken your cause ? "  
Ah ! were you destined to die at Culloden,  
Victory crown'd not your fall with applause :



Still were you happy in death's earthly slumber,  
 You rest with your clan in the caves of Braemar;  
 The pibroch resounds, to the piper's loud number, 31  
 Your deeds on the echoes of dark Loch na Garr.

Years have roll'd on, Loch na Garr, since I left you,  
 Years must elapse ere I tread you again:  
 Nature of verdure and flow'rs has bereft you,  
 Yet still are you dearer than Albion's plain.  
 England! thy beauties are tame and domestic  
 To one who has roved o'er the mountains afar:  
 Oh for the crags that are wild and majestic!  
 The steep frowning glories of dark Loch na Garr. 40

### ✓ , WHEN WE TWO PARTED .

WHEN we two parted  
 In silence and tears,  
 Half broken-hearted  
 To sever for years,  
 Pale grew thy cheek and cold,  
 Colder thy kiss;  
 Truly that hour foretold  
 Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning  
 Sunk chill on my brow—  
 It felt like the warning  
 Of what I feel now.  
 Thy vows are all broken,  
 And light is thy fame:  
 I hear thy name spoken,  
 And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,  
 A knell to mine ear;  
 A shudder comes o'er me—  
 Why wert thou so dear?

## WELL! THOU ART HAPPY

3

They know not I knew thee,  
Who knew thee too well :—  
Long, long shall I rue thee,  
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met—  
In silence I grieve,  
That thy heart could forget,  
Thy spirit deceive.  
If I should meet thee  
After long years,  
How should I greet thee ?—  
With silence and tears.

30

1808. ✓

## WELL! THOU ART HAPPY

WELL! thou art happy, and I feel  
That I should thus be happy too ;  
For still my heart regards thy weal  
Warmly, as it was wont to do.

Thy husband's blest—and 'twill impart  
Some pangs to view his happier lot :  
But let them pass—Oh ! how my heart  
Would hate him if he loved thee not !

When late I saw thy favourite child,  
I thought my jealous heart would break ;  
But when the unconscious infant smiled,  
I kiss'd it for its mother's sake.

10

I kiss'd it,—and repress'd my sighs  
Its father in its face to see ;  
But then it had its mother's eyes,  
And they were all to love and me.

Mary, adieu ! I must away :  
While thou art blest I'll not repine ;  
But near thee I can never stay ;  
My heart would soon again be thine.

20

## WELL! THOU ART HAPPY

I deem'd that time, I deem'd that pride,  
 Had quench'd at length my boyish flame ;  
 Nor knew, till seated by thy side,  
 My heart in all,—save hope,—the same.

Yet was I calm : I knew the time  
 My breast would thrill before thy look ;  
 But now to tremble were a crime—

\*. We met,—and not a nerve was shook.

I saw thee gaze upon my face,  
 Yet meet with no confusion there :  
 One only feeling could'st thou trace ;  
 The sullen calmness of despair.

30

Away ! away ! my early dream  
 Remembrance never must awake :  
 Oh ! where is Lethe's fabled stream ?  
 My foolish heart, be still, or break.

*November 2, 1808.*

## FILL THE GOBLET AGAIN

## A SONG

FILL the goblet again ! for I never before  
 Felt the glow which now gladdens my heart to its core ;  
 Let us drink !—who would not ?—since, through life's  
 varied round,

In the goblet alone no deception is found.

I have tried in its turn all that life can supply ;  
 I have bask'd in the beam of a dark rolling eye ;  
 I have loved !—who has not ?—but what heart can  
 declare

That pleasure existed while passion was there ?

In the days of my youth, when the heart's in its spring,  
 And dreams that affection can never take wing,  
 I had friends !—who has not ?—but what tongue will  
 avow,

That friends, rosy wine ! are so faithful as thou ?



The heart of a mistress some boy may estrange,  
 Friendship shifts with the sunbeam—thou never canst  
     change ;

Thou grow'st old—who does not ?—but on earth what  
     appears,  
 Whose virtues, like thine, still increase with its years ?

Yet if blest to the utmost that love can bestow,  
 Should a rival bow down to our idol below,  
 We are jealous !—who's not ?—thou hast no such alloy ;  
 For the more that enjoy thee, the more we enjoy. 20

Then the season of youth and its vanities past,  
 For refuge we fly to the goblet at last ;  
 There we find—do we not ?—in the flow of the soul,  
 That truth, as of yore, is confined to the bowl.

When the box of Pandora was opened on earth,  
 And Misery's triumph commenced over Mirth,  
 Hope was left,—was she not ?—but the goblet we kiss,  
 And care not for Hope, who are certain of bliss.

Long life to the grape ! for when summer is flown,  
 The age of our nectar shall gladden our own : 30  
 We must die—who shall not ?—May our sins be for-  
     given,  
 And Hebe shall never be idle in heaven.

LINES TO MR. HODGSON

WRITTEN ON BOARD THE LISBON PACKET

HUZZA ! Hodgson, we are going,  
     Our embargo's off at last ;  
 Favourable breezes blowing  
     Bend the canvas o'er the mast.  
 From aloft the signal's streaming,  
     Hark ! the farewell gun is fired ;  
 Women screeching, tars blaspheming,  
     Tell us that our time's expired.

# LINES TO MR. HODGSON

Here 's a rascal  
 Come to task all,  
 Prying from the custom-house;  
 Trunks unpacking,  
 Cases cracking,  
 Not a corner for a mouse  
 'Scapes unsearch'd amid the racket,  
 Ere we sail on board the Packet.

10

Now our boatmen quit their mooring,  
 And all hands must ply the oar;  
 Baggage from the quay is lowering,  
 We're impatient, push from shore.  
 "Have a care! that case holds liquor—  
 Stop the boat—I'm sick—oh Lord!"  
 "Sick, ma'am, damme, you'll be sicker  
 Ere you've been an hour on board."  
 Thus are screaming  
 Men and women,  
 Gemmen, ladies, servants, Jacks;  
 Here entangling,  
 All are wrangling,  
 Stuck together close as wax.—  
 Such the general noise and racket,  
 Ere we reach the Lisbon Packet.

20

30

Now we've reach'd her, lo! the captain,  
 Gallant Kidd, commands the crew;  
 Passengers their berths are clapt in,  
 Some to grumble, some to spew.  
 "Heyday! call you that a cabin?  
 Why 'tis hardly three feet square:  
 Not enough to stow Queen Mab in—  
 Who the deuce can harbour there?"  
 "Who, sir? plenty—  
 Nobles twenty  
 Did at once my vessel fill."—  
 "Did they? Jesus,  
 How you squeeze us!  
 Would to God they did so still:

40

Then I'd scape the heat and racket  
 Of the good ship, Lisbon Packet."

Fletcher ! Murray ! Bob ! where are you ?

Stretch'd along the deck like logs— 50  
 Bear a hand, you jolly tar, you !

Here 's a rope's end for the dogs.  
 Hobhouse muttering fearful curses,  
 As the hatchway down he rolls,  
 Now his breakfast, now his verses,  
 Vomits forth—and damns our souls.

" Here 's a stanza  
 On Braganza—  
 Help ! "—" A couplet ? "—" No, a cup  
 Of warm water—" 60

" What 's the matter ? "  
 " Zounds ! my liver 's coming up ;  
 I shall not survive the racket  
 Of this brutal Lisbon Packet."

Now at length we're off for Turkey,  
 Lord knows when we shall come back !  
 Breezes foul and tempests murky

May unship us in a crack.  
 But, since life at most a jest is, 70  
 As philosophers allow,  
 Still to laugh by far the best is,  
 Then laugh on—as I do now.

Laugh at all things,  
 Great and small things,  
 Sick or well, at sea or shore ;  
 While we're quaffing,  
 Let 's have laughing—

Who the devil cares for more ?—  
 Some good wine ! and who would lack it,  
 Ev'n on board the Lisbon Packet ? 80

Falmouth Roads, *June 30, 1809.*



# STANZAS WRITTEN IN PASSING THE AMBRACIAN GULF

THROUGH cloudless skies, in silvery sheen,  
Full beams the moon on Actium's coast :  
And on these waves, for Egypt's queen,  
The ancient world was won and lost.

And now upon the scene I look,  
The azure grave of many a Roman ;  
Where stern Ambition once forsook  
His wavering crown to follow woman.

Florence ! whom I will love as well  
As ever yet was said or sung  
(Since Orpheus sang his spouse from hell),  
Whilst thou art fair and I am young ;

10

Sweet Florence ! those were pleasant times,  
When worlds were staked for ladies' eyes :  
Had bards as many realms as rhymes,  
Thy charms might raise new Antonies.

Though Fate forbids such things to be,  
Yet, by thine eyes and ringlets curl'd !  
I cannot lose a world for thee,  
But would not lose thee for a world.

20

*November 14, 1809.*

## WRITTEN AFTER SWIMMING FROM SESTOS TO ABYDOS

IF, in the month of dark December,  
Leander, who was nightly wont  
(What maid will not the tale remember ?)  
To cross thy stream, broad Hellespont !

If, when the wintry tempest roar'd,  
He sped to Hero, nothing loth,  
And thus of old thy current pour'd,  
Fair Venus ! how I pity both !

# MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART

9

For *me*, degenerate modern wretch,  
 Though in the genial month of May,  
 My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,  
 And think I've done a feat to-day.

10

But since he cross'd the rapid tide,  
 According to the doubtful story,  
 To woo,—and—Lord knows what beside,  
 And swam for Love, as I for Glory ;

'Twere hard to say who fared the best :  
 Sad mortals ! thus the gods still plague you !  
 He lost his labour, I my jest ;  
 For he was drown'd, and I've the ague.

20

*May 9, 1810.*

# MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART

*Ζώνη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.*

MAID of Athens, ere we part,  
 Give, oh give me back my heart !  
 Or, since that has left my breast,  
 Keep it now, and take the rest !  
 Hear my vow before I go,  
*Ζώνη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.*

By those tresses unconfined,  
 Woo'd by each Ægean wind ;  
 By those lids whose jetty fringo  
 Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge ;  
 By those wild eyes like the roe,  
*Ζώνη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.*

10

By that lip I long to taste ;  
 By that zone-encircled waist ;  
 By all the token-flowers that tell  
 What words can never speak so well ;  
 By love's alternate joy and woe,  
*Ζώνη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.*

10 MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART

Maid of Athens ! I am gone :  
 Think of me, sweet ! when alone.  
 Though I fly to Istambol,  
 Athens holds my heart and soul :  
 Can I cease to love thee ? No !  
*Zôh mou, sâs âgapô.*

20

Athens, 1810.

✓ ONE STRUGGLE MORE, AND I AM FREE

ONE struggle more, and I am free  
 From pangs that rend my heart in twain ;  
 ✕ One last long sigh to love and thee,  
 Then back to busy life again.  
 It suits me well to mingle now  
 With things that never pleased before :  
 Though every joy is fled below,  
 What future grief can touch me more ?

Then bring me wine, the banquet bring ;  
 Man was not form'd to live alone :  
 ✕ I'll be that light, unmeaning thing  
 That smiles with all, and weeps with none.  
 It was not thus in days more dear,  
 It never would have been, but thou  
 Hast fled, and left me lonely here ;  
 Thou'rt nothing—all are nothing now.

10

In vain my lyre would lightly breathe !  
 The smile that sorrow fain would wear  
 But mocks the woe that lurks beneath,  
 Like roses o'er a sepulchre.  
 Though gay companions o'er the bowl  
 Dispel awhile the sense of ill :  
 Though pleasure fires the maddening soul,  
 The heart,—the heart is lonely still !

20

On many a lone and lovely night  
 It sooth'd to gaze upon the sky ;  
 For then I deem'd the heavenly light  
 Shone sweetly on thy pensive eye :



And oft I thought at Cynthia's noon,  
When sailing o'er the Ægean wave,  
"Now Thyrsa gazes on that moon".—  
Alas, it gleam'd upon her grave!

30

When stretch'd on fever's sleepless bed,  
And sickness shrunk my throbbing veins,  
"'Tis comfort still," I faintly said,  
"That Thyrsa cannot know my pains :"  
Like freedom to the time-worn slave,  
A boon 'tis idle then to give,  
Relenting Nature vainly gave  
My life, when Thyrsa ceased to live!

40

My Thyrsa's pledge in better days,  
When love and life alike were new!  
How different now thou meet'st my gaze!  
How tinged by time with sorrow's hue!  
The heart that gave itself with thee  
Is silent—ah, were mine as still!  
Though cold as e'en the dead can be,  
It feels, it sickens with the chill.

Thou bitter pledge! thou mournful token!  
Though painful, welcome to my breast!  
Still, still preserve that love unbroken,  
Or break the heart to which thou'rt press'd.  
Time tempers love, but not removes,  
More hallow'd when its hope is fled:  
Oh! what are thousand living loves  
To that which cannot quit the dead?

50

## EUTHANASIA

WHEN Time, or soon or late, shall bring  
The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead,  
Oblivion! may thy languid wing  
Wave gently o'er my dying bed!

## EUTHANASIA

No band of friends or heirs be there,  
 To weep, or wish, the coming blow :  
 No maiden, with dishevelled hair,  
 To feel, or feign, decorous woe.

But silent let me sink to earth,  
 With no officious mourners near :  
 I would not mar one hour of mirth,  
 Nor startle friendship with a tear.

10

Yet Love, if Love in such an hour  
 Could nobly check its useless sighs,  
 Might then exert its latest power  
 In her who lives, and him who dies.

'Twere sweet, my Psyche ! to the last  
 Thy features still serene to see :  
 Forgetful of its struggles past,  
 E'en Pain itself should smile on thee.

20

But vain the wish—for Beauty still  
 Will shrink, as shrinks the ebbing breath ;  
 And Woman's tears, produced at will,  
 Deceive in life, unman in death.

Then lonely be my latest hour,  
 Without regret, without a groan ;  
 For thousands Death hath ceas'd to lower,  
 And pain been transient or unknown.

" Ay, but to die, and go," alas !  
 Where all have gone, and all must go !  
 To be the nothing that I was  
 Ere born to life and living woe !

30

Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,  
 Count o'er thy days from anguish free,  
 And know, whatever thou hast been,  
 'Tis something better not to be.

# AND THOU ART DEAD, AS YOUNG AND FAIR

“Heu, quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui  
meminisse !”

AND thou art dead, as young and fair  
As aught of mortal birth ;  
And form so soft, and charms so rare,  
Too soon return'd to Earth !  
Though Earth received them in her bed  
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread  
In carelessness or mirth,  
There is an eye which could not brook  
A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low, 10  
Nor gaze upon the spot ;  
There flowers or weeds at will may grow,  
So I behold them not :  
It is enough for me to prove  
That what I loved, and long must love,  
Like common earth can rot ;  
To me there needs no stone to tell,  
'Tis Nothing that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last 20  
As fervently as thou,  
Who didst not change through all the past,  
And canst not alter now.  
The love where Death has set his seal,  
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,  
Nor falsehood disavow :  
And, what were worse, thou canst not see  
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours ;  
The worst can be but mine :  
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers, 30  
Shall never more be thine.



# 14 THOU ART DEAD, AS YOUNG AND FAIR

The silence of that dreamless sleep  
I envy now too much to weep ;  
Nor need I to repine,  
That all those charms have pass'd away ;  
I might have watch'd through long decay.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd  
Must fall the earliest prey ;

Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,

The leaves must drop away :

\* And yet it were a greater grief

To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,

Than see it pluck'd to-day ;

Since earthly eye but ill can bear

To trace the change to foul from fair.

40

I know not if I could have borne

To see thy beauties fade ;

The night that follow'd such a morn

Had worn a deeper shade :

Thy day without a cloud hath pass'd,

And thou wert lovely to the last ;

Extinguish'd, not decay'd ;

As stars that shoot along the sky

Shine brightest as they fall from high.

50

As once I wept, if I could weep,

My tears might well be shed,

To think I was not near to keep

One vigil o'er thy bed ;

To gaze, how fondly ! on thy face,

To fold thee in a faint embrace,

Uphold thy drooping head ;

And show that love, however vain,

Nor thou nor I can feel again.

60

Yet how much less it were to gain,

Though thou hast left me free,

The loveliest things that still remain,

Than thus remember thee !

The all of thine that cannot die  
Through dark and dread Eternity  
Returns again to me, 70  
And more thy buried love endears  
Than aught except its living years.  
February, 1812.

IF SOMETIMES IN THE HAUNTS OF MEN

IF sometimes in the haunts of men  
Thine image from my breast may fade,  
The lonely hour presents again  
The semblance of thy gentle shade :  
And now that sad and silent hour  
Thus much of thee can still restore,  
And sorrow unobserved may pour  
The plaint she dare not speak before.

Oh, pardon that in crowds awhile  
I waste one thought I owe to thee, 10  
And self-condemn'd, appear to smile,  
Unfaithful to thy memory :  
Nor deem that memory less dear,  
That then I seem not to repine ;  
I would not fools should overhear  
One sigh that should be wholly *thine*.

If not the goblet pass unquaff'd,  
It is not drain'd to banish care ;  
The cup must hold a deadlier draught, 20  
That brings a Lethe for despair.  
And could Oblivion set my soul  
From all her troubled visions free,  
I'd dash to earth the sweetest bowl  
That drown'd a single thought of thee.

For wert thou vanish'd from my mind,  
Where could my vacant bosom turn ?  
And who would then remain behind  
To honour thine abandon'd Urn ?

## 16 IF SOMETIMES IN THE HAUNTS OF MEN

No, no—it is my sorrow's pride  
That last dear duty to fulfil : 30  
Though all the world forget beside,  
'Tis meet that I remember still.

For well I know, that such had been  
Thy gentle care for him, who now  
Unmourn'd shall quit this mortal scene,  
Where none regarded him, but thou :  
And, oh ! I feel in *that* was given  
A blessing never meant for me ;  
Thou wert too like a dream of Heaven  
For earthly Love to merit thee. 40  
*March 14, 1812.*

### LINES TO A LADY WEEPING

WEEP, daughter of a royal line,  
A Sire's disgrace, a realm's decay ;  
Ah ! happy if each tear of thine  
Could wash a father's fault away !  
Weep—for thy tears are Virtue's tears—  
Auspicious to these suffering isles ;  
And be each drop in future years  
Repaid thee by thy people's smiles !  
*March, 1812.*

### ✓ REMEMBER HIM WHOM PASSION'S POWER

REMEMBER him whom passion's power  
Severely, deeply, vainly proved :  
Remember thou that dangerous hour,  
When neither fell, though both were loved.  
That yielding breast, that melting eye,  
Too much invited to be bless'd :  
That gentle prayer, that pleading sigh,  
The wilder wish reproved, repress'd.  
Oh ! let me feel that all I lost  
But saved thee all that conscience fears ; 10  
And blush for every pang it cost  
To spare the vain remorse of years.



## REMEMBER HIM WHOM PASSION'S POWER 17

Yet think of this when many a tongue,  
Whose busy accents whisper blame,  
Would do the heart that loved thee wrong,  
And brand a nearly blighted name.

Think that, whate'er to others, thou  
Hast seen each selfish thought subdued :  
I bless thy purer soul even now,  
Even now, in midnight solitude.

20

Oh, God ! that we had met in time,  
Our hearts as fond, thy hand more free ;  
When thou hadst loved without a crime,  
And I been less unworthy thee !

Far may thy days, as heretofore,  
From this our gaudy world be past !  
And that too bitter moment o'er,  
Oh ! may such trial be thy last.

This heart, alas ! perverted long,  
Itself destroy'd might there destroy ;  
To meet thee in the glittering throng,  
Would wake Presumption's hope of joy.

30

Then to the things whose bliss or woe,  
Like mine, is wild and worthless all,  
That world resign—such scenes forego,  
Where those who feel must surely fall.

Thy youth, thy charms, thy tenderness,  
Thy soul from long seclusion pure ;  
From what even here hath pass'd, may guess  
What there thy bosom must endure.

40

Oh ! pardon that imploring tear,  
Since not by Virtue shed in vain,  
My frenzy drew from eyes so dear ;  
For me they shall not weep again.

Though long and mournful must it be,  
The thought that we no more may meet ;  
Yet I deserve the stern decree,  
And almost deem the sentence sweet.

## 18 REMEMBER HIM WHOM PASSION'S POWER

Still, had I loved thee less, my heart  
Had then less sacrificed to thine ;  
It felt not half so much to part  
As if its guilt had made thee mine.

50

1813.

### ✓ SONNET, TO GENEVRA

THINE eyes' blue tenderness, thy long fair hair,  
And the wan lustre of thy features—caught  
From contemplation—where serenely wrought,  
Seems Sorrow's softness charm'd from its despair—  
Have thrown such speaking sadness in thine air,  
That—but I know thy blessed bosom fraught  
With mines of unalloy'd and stainless thought—  
I should have deem'd thee doom'd to earthly care.  
With such an aspect by his colours blent,  
When from his beauty-breathing pencil born  
(Except that *thou* hast nothing to repent),  
The Magdalen of Guido saw the morn—  
Such seem'st thou—but how much more excellent !  
With nought Remorse can claim—nor Virtue scorn.  
*December 17, 1813.*

### SONNET, TO THE SAME

THY cheek is pale with thought, but not from woe,  
And yet so lovely, that if Mirth could flush  
Its rose of whiteness with the brightest blush,  
My heart would wish away that ruder glow :  
And dazzle not thy deep-blue eyes—but, oh !  
While gazing on them sterner eyes will gush,  
And into mine my mother's weakness rush,  
Soft as the last drops round heaven's airy bow.  
For, through thy long dark lashes low depending,  
The soul of melancholy Gentleness  
Gleams like a seraph from the sky descending.  
Above all pain, yet pitying all distress ;  
At once such majesty with sweetness blending,  
I worship more, but cannot love thee less.  
*December 17, 1813.*



## ODE TO NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE

“ Expende Annibalem :—quot libras in duce summo Invenies ? ”—Juvenal, *Sat.* x.

“ The Emperor Nepos was acknowledged by the Senate, by the Italians, and by the Provincials of Gaul ; his moral virtues, and military talents, were loudly celebrated ; and those who derived any private benefit from his government announced in prophetic strains the restoration of public felicity. . . . By this shameful abdication, he protracted his life a few years, in a very ambiguous state, between an Emperor and an Exile, till ——.”—Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall*, vol. vi., p. 220.

## I

’Tis done—but yesterday a King !  
And arm’d with Kings to strive—  
And now thou art a nameless thing :  
So abject—yet alive !  
Is this the man of thousand thrones,  
Who strew’d our earth with hostile bones,  
And can he thus survive ?  
Since he, miscall’d the Morning Star,  
Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

## II

Ill-minded man ! why scourge thy kind 10  
Who bow’d so low the knee ?  
By gazing on thyself grown blind,  
Thou taught’st the rest to see.  
With might unquestion’d,—power to save,—  
Thine only gift hath been the grave,  
To those that worshipp’d thee ;  
Nor till thy fall could mortals guess  
Ambition’s less than littleness !

## III

Thanks for that lesson—It will teach  
To after-warriors more 20  
Than high Philosophy can preach,  
And vainly preach’d before.

That spell upon the minds of men  
 Breaks never to unite again,  
 That led them to adore  
 Those Pagod things of sabre sway,  
 With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

## IV

The triumph and the vanity,  
 The rapture of the strife—  
 The earthquake voice of Victory,  
 To thee the breath of life ;  
 The sword, the sceptre, and that sway  
 Which man seem'd made but to obey,  
 Wherewith renown was rife—  
 All quell'd !—Dark Spirit ! what must be  
 The madness of thy memory !

30

## V

The Desolator desolate !  
 The Victor overthrown !  
 The Arbiter of others' fate  
 A Suppliant for his own !  
 Is it some yet imperial hope  
 That with such change can calmly cope  
 Or dread of death alone ?  
 To die a prince—or live a slave—  
 Thy choice is most ignobly brave.

40

## VI

He who of old would rend the oak,  
 Dream'd not of the rebound :  
 Chain'd by the trunk he vainly broke—  
 Alone—how look'd he round ?  
 Thou, in the sternness of thy strength,  
 An equal deed hast done at length,  
 And darker fate hast found :  
 He fell, the forest prowlers' prey ;  
 But thou must eat thy heart away !

50

## VII

The Roman, when his burning heart  
Was slaked with blood of Rome,  
Threw down the dagger—dared depart,  
In savage grandeur, home—  
He dared depart in utter scorn  
Of men that such a yoke had borne,  
Yet left him such a doom !  
His only glory was that hour  
Of self-upheld abandon'd power.

60

## VIII

The Spaniard, when the lust of sway  
Had lost its quickening spell,  
Cast crowns for rosaries away,  
An empire for a cell ;  
A strict accountant of his beads,  
A subtle disputant on creeds,  
His dotage trifled well :  
Yet better had he neither known  
A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

70

## IX

But thou—from thy reluctant hand  
The thunderbolt is wrung—  
Too late thou leav'st the high command  
To which thy weakness clung ;  
All Evil Spirit as thou art,  
It is enough to grieve the heart  
To see thine own unstrung ;  
To think that God's fair world hath been  
The footstool of a thing so mean ;

80

## X

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,  
Who thus can hoard his own !  
And Monarchs bow'd the trembling limb,  
And thank'd him for a throne !



22 ODE TO NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE

Fair Freedom ! we may hold thee dear,  
When thus thy mightiest foes their fear  
In humblest guise have shown.  
Oh ! ne'er may tyrant leave behind  
A brighter name to lure mankind !

90

XI

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,  
Nor written thus in vain—  
Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,  
Or deepen every stain :  
If thou hadst died as honour dies,  
Some new Napoleon might arise,  
To shame the world again—  
But who would soar the solar height,  
To set in such a starless night ?

XII

Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust  
Is vile as vulgar clay ;  
Thy scales, Mortality ! are just  
To all that pass away ;  
But yet methought the living great  
Some higher sparks should animate,  
To dazzle and dismay :  
Nor deem'd Contempt could thus make mirth  
Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

100

XIII

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,  
Thy still imperial bride ;  
How bears her breast the torturing hour ?  
Still clings she to thy side ?  
Must she too bend, must she too share  
Thy late repentance, long despair,  
Thou throneless Homicide ?  
If still she loves thee, hoard that gem,—  
'Tis worth thy vanish'd diadem !

110

## XIV

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,  
And gaze upon the sea ;  
That element may meet thy smile—  
It ne'er was ruled by thee !  
Or trace with thine all idle hand  
In loitering mood upon the sand  
That Earth is now as free !  
That Corinth's pedagogue hath now  
Transferr'd his by-word to thy brow.

120

## XV

Thou Timour ! in his captive's cage  
What thoughts will there be thine,  
While brooding in thy prison'd rage ?  
But one—"The world *was* mine !"   
Unless, like he of Babylon,  
All sense is with thy sceptre gone,  
Life will not long confine  
That spirit pour'd so widely forth—  
So long obey'd—so little worth !

130

## XVI

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven,  
Wilt thou withstand the shock ?  
And share with him, the unforgiven,  
His vulture and his rock !  
Foredoom'd by God—by man accurst,  
And that last act, though not thy worst,  
The very Fiend's arch mock ;  
He in his fall preserved his pride,  
And, if a mortal, had as proudly died !

140

## XVII

There was a day—there was an hour,  
While earth was Gaul's—Gaul thine—  
When that immeasurable power  
Unsated to resign

24 ODE TO NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE

Had been an act of purer fame  
 Than gathers round Marengo's name, 150  
 And gilded thy decline,  
 Through the long twilight of all time,  
 Despite some passing clouds of crime.

XVIII

But thou forsooth must be a king,  
 And don the purple vest,  
 As if that foolish robe could wring  
 Remembrance from thy breast.  
 Where is that faded garment ? where  
 The gewgaws thou wert fond to wear,  
 The star, the string, the crest ? 160  
 Vain froward child of empire ! say,  
 Are all thy playthings snatched away ?

XIX

Where may the wearied eye repose  
 When gazing on the Great ;  
 Where neither guilty glory glows,  
 Nor despicable state ?  
 Yes—one—the first—the last—the best—  
 The Cincinnatus of the West,  
 Whom envy dared not hate,  
 Bequeath'd the name of Washington, 170  
 To make man blush there was but one !

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

I SPEAK not, I trace not, I breathe not thy name,  
 There is grief in the sound, there is guilt in the fame :  
 But the tear which now burns on my cheek may impart  
 The deep thoughts that dwell in that silence of heart.

Too brief for our passion, too long for our peace,  
 Were those hours—can their joy or their bitterness cease ?  
 We repent, we abjure, we will break from our chain,—  
 We will part, we will fly to—unite it again !



Oh ! thine be the gladness, and mine be the guilt !  
 Forgive me, adored one !—forsake, if thou wilt ;— 10  
 But the heart which is thine shall expire undebased,  
 And *man* shall not break it—whatever *thou* mayst.

And stern to the haughty, but humble to thee,  
 This soul, in its bitterest blackness, shall be ;  
 And our days seem as swift, and our moments more  
 sweet,

With thee by my side, than with worlds at our feet.

One sigh of thy sorrow, one look of thy love,  
 Shall turn me or fix, shall reward or reprove ;  
 And the heartless may wonder at all I resign—  
 Thy lip shall reply, not to them, but to *mine*. 20

May, 1814.

## TO BELSHAZZAR

BELSHAZZAR ! from the banquet turn,

Nor in thy sensual fulness fall ;

Behold ! while yet before thee burn

The graven words, the glowing wall,  
 Many a despot men miscall

Crown'd and anointed from on high ;

But thou, the weakest, worst of all—

Is it not written, thou must die ?

Go ! dash the roses from thy brow—

Grey hairs but poorly wreathe with them ; 10

Youth's garlands misbecome thee now,

More than thy very diadem,

Where thou hast tarnish'd every gem :—

Then throw the worthless bauble by,

Which, worn by thee, ev'n slaves condemn ;

And learn like better men to die !

Oh ! early in the balance weigh'd,

And ever light of word and worth,

Whose soul expired ere youth decay'd,

And left thee but a mass of earth. 20

To see thee moves the scorner's mirth :

But tears in Hope's averted eye

Lament that even thou hadst birth—

Unfit to govern, live, or die.



# HEBREW MELODIES

## ADVERTISEMENT

The subsequent poems were written at the request of my friend, the Hon. Douglas Kinnaird, for a Selection of Hebrew Melodies, and have been published, with the music, arranged by Mr. Braham and Mr. Nathan.

*January, 1815.*

### SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

#### I

SHE walks in beauty, like the night  
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;  
And all that's best of dark and bright  
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:  
Thus mellow'd to that tender light  
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

#### II

One shade the more, one ray the less,  
Had half impair'd the nameless grace  
Which waves in every raven tress,  
Or softly lightens o'er her face;  
Where thoughts serenely sweet express  
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

10

#### III

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,  
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,  
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,  
But tell of days in goodness spent,  
A mind at peace with all below,  
A heart whose love is innocent!

## THE HARP THE MONARCH MINSTREL SWEPT

## I

THE harp the monarch minstrel swept,  
 The King of men, the loved of Heaven,  
 Which Music hallow'd while she wept  
 O'er tones her heart of hearts had given,  
 Redoubled be her tears, its chords are riven !  
 It soften'd men of iron mould,  
 It gave them virtues not their own ;  
 No ear so dull, no soul so cold,  
 That felt not, fired not to the tone,  
 Till David's lyre grew mightier than his throne !

9

## II

It told the triumphs of our King,  
 It wafted glory to our God ;  
 It made our gladden'd valleys ring,  
 The cedars bow, the mountains nod ;  
 Its sound aspired to heaven and there abode !  
 Since then, though heard on earth no more,  
 Devotion and her daughter Love  
 Still bid the bursting spirit soar  
 To sounds that seem as from above,  
 In dreams that day's broad light can not remove.

19

## IF THAT HIGH WORLD

## I

IF that high world, which lies beyond  
 Our own, surviving Love endears ;  
 If there the cherish'd heart be fond,  
 The eye the same, except in tears—  
 How welcome those untrodden spheres !  
 How sweet this very hour to die !  
 To soar from earth and find all fears  
 Lost in thy light—Eternity !

## II

It must be so : 'tis not for self  
 That we so tremble on the brink ;  
 And striving to o'erleap the gulf,  
 Yet cling to Being's severing link.

10

## IF THAT HIGH WORLD

Oh ! in that future let us think  
 To hold each heart the heart that shares ;  
 With them the immortal waters drink,  
 And soul in soul grow deathless theirs !

## ✓ THE WILD GAZELLE

## I

THE wild gazelle on Judah's hills  
 Exulting yet may bound,  
 And drink from all the living rills  
 That gush on holy ground :  
 Its airy step and glorious eye  
 May glance in tameless transport by : - -

## II

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,  
 Hath Judah witness'd there ;  
 And o'er her scenes of lost delight  
 Inhabitants more fair.  
 The cedars wave on Lebanon,  
 But Judah's statelier maids are gone !

10

## III

More blest each palm that shades those plains  
 Than Israel's scatter'd race ;  
 For, taking root, it there remains  
 In solitary grace :  
 It cannot quit its place of birth,  
 It will not live in other earth.

## IV

But we must wander witheringly,  
 In other lands to die ;  
 And where our fathers' ashes be,  
 Our own may never lie :  
 Our temple hath not left a stone,  
 And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

20



## OH ! WEEP FOR THOSE

## I

Oh ! weep for those that wept by Babel's stream,  
 Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream ;  
 Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell ;  
 Mourn—where their God hath dwelt the godless dwell !

## II

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet ?  
 And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet ?  
 And Judah's melody once more rejoice  
 The hearts that leap'd before its heavenly voice ?

## III

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,  
 How shall ye flee away and be at rest !  
 The wild-dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,  
 Mankind their country—Israel but the grave !

10

## ON JORDAN'S BANKS

## I

On Jordan's banks the Arab's camels stray,  
 On Sion's hill the False One's votaries pray,  
 The Baal-adorer bows on Sinai's steep—  
 Yet there—even there—Oh God ! thy thunders sleep :

## II

There—where thy finger scorch'd the tablet stone !  
 There—where thy shadow to thy people shone !  
 Thy glory shrouded in its garb of fire :  
 Thyself—none living see and not expire !

## III

Oh ! in the lightning let thy glance appear ;  
 Sweep from his shiver'd hand the oppressor's spear !  
 How long by tyrants shall thy land be trod ?  
 How long thy temple worshipless, Oh God ?

9



## JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER

## I

SINCE our Country, our God—Oh, my Sire !  
Demand that thy Daughter expire ;  
Since thy triumph was bought by thy vow—  
Strike the bosom that 's bared for thee now !

## II

And the voice of my mourning is o'er,  
And the mountains behold me no more :  
If the hand that I love lay me low !  
There cannot be pain in the blow !

## III

And of this, oh, my Father ! be sure—  
That the blood of thy child is as pure  
As the blessing I beg ere it flow,  
And the last thought that soothes me below.

10

## IV

Though the virgins of Salem lament,  
Be the judge and the hero unbent !  
I have won the great battle for thee,  
And my Father and Country are free !

## V

When this blood of thy giving hath gush'd,  
When the voice that thou lovest is hush'd,  
Let my memory still be thy pride,  
And forget not I smiled as I died !

20

## OH ! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM

## I

OH ! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,  
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb ;  
But on thy turf shall roses rear  
Their leaves, the earliest of the year ;  
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom :

## II

And oft by yon blue gushing stream  
 Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,  
 And feed deep thought with many a dream,  
 And lingering pause and lightly tread ;  
 Fond wretch ! as if her step disturb'd the dead !<sup>9</sup>

## III

Away ! we know that tears are vain,  
 That death nor heeds nor hears distress :  
 Will this unteach us to complain ?  
 Or make one mourner weep the less ?  
 And thou—who tell'st me to forget,  
 Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

## ✓ MY SOUL IS DARK

## I

My soul is dark—Oh ! quickly string  
 The harp I yet can brook to hear ;  
 And let thy gentle fingers fling  
 Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear.  
 If in this heart a hope be dear,  
 That sound shall charm it forth again :  
 If in these eyes there lurk a tear,  
 'Twill flow, and cease to burn my brain.

## II

But bid the strain be wild and deep,  
 Nor let thy notes of joy be first :  
 I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,  
 Or else this heavy heart will burst ;  
 For it hath been by sorrow nursed,  
 And ach'd in sleepless silence long ;  
 And now 'tis doom'd to know the worst,  
 And break at once—or yield to song.

## I SAW THEE WEEP

## I

I SAW thee weep—the big bright tear  
 Came o'er that eye of blue ;  
 And then methought it did appear  
 A violet dropping dew ;  
 I saw thee smile—the sapphire's blaze  
 Beside thee ceased to shine ;  
 It could not match the living rays  
 That fill'd that glance of thine.

## II

As clouds from yonder sun receive  
 A deep and mellow dye,  
 Which scarce the shade of coming eve  
 Can banish from the sky,  
 Those smiles unto the moodiest mind  
 Their own pure joy impart ;  
 Their sunshine leaves a glow behind  
 That lightens o'er the heart.

10

## THY DAYS ARE DONE

## I

THY days are done, thy fame begun ;  
 Thy country's strains record  
 The triumphs of her chosen Son,  
 The slaughters of his sword !  
 The deeds he did, the fields he won,  
 The freedom he restored !

## II

Though thou art fall'n, while we are free  
 Thou shalt not taste of death !  
 The generous blood that flow'd from thee  
 Disdain'd to sink beneath :  
 Within our veins its currents be,  
 Thy spirit on our breath !

10



## III

Thy name, our charging hosts along,  
 Shall be the battle-word !  
 Thy fall, the theme of choral song  
 From virgin voices pour'd !  
 To weep would do thy glory wrong :  
 Thou shalt not be deplored.

## SAUL

## I

THOU whose spell can raise the dead,  
 Bid the prophet's form appear.  
 " Samuel, raise thy buried head !  
 King, behold the phantom seer ! "  
 Earth yawn'd ; he stood the centre of a cloud :  
 Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud.  
 Death stood all glassy in his fixed eye ;  
 His hand was wither'd, and his veins were dry ;  
 His foot, in bony whiteness, glitter'd there,  
 Shrunk and sinewless, and ghastly bare ; 10  
 From lips that moved not and unbreathing frame,  
 Like cavern'd winds, the hollow accents came.  
 Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak,  
 At once, and blasted by the thunder-stroke.

## II

" Why is my sleep disquieted ?  
 Who is he that calls the dead ?  
 Is it thou, O King ? Behold,  
 Bloodless are these limbs, and cold :  
 Such are mine ; and such shall be  
 Thine to-morrow, when with me : 20  
 Ere the coming day is done,  
 Such shalt thou be, such thy son.  
 Fare thee well, but for a day,  
 Then we mix our mouldering clay.  
 Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,  
 Pierced by shafts of many a bow ;



And the falchion by thy side  
 To thy heart thy hand shall guide :  
 Crownless, breathless, headless fall,  
 Son and sire, the house of Saul ! ”

30

### SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE

#### I

WARRIORS and chiefs ! should the shaft or the sword  
 Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,  
 Heed not the corse, though a king's, in your path :  
 Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath !

#### II

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,  
 Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,  
 Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet !  
 Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

#### III

Farewell to others, but never we part,  
 Heir to my royalty, son of my heart !  
 Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,  
 Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day !

10

“ ALL IS VANITY, SAITH THE PREACHER ”

#### I

FAME, wisdom, love, and power were mine,  
 And health and youth possess'd me ;  
 My goblets blush'd from every vine,  
 And lovely forms caress'd me ;  
 I sunn'd my heart in beauty's eyes,  
 And felt my soul grow tender ;  
 All earth can give, or mortal prize,  
 Was mine of regal splendour.

## II

I strive to number o'er what days  
 Remembrance can discover, 10  
 Which all that life or earth displays  
 Would lure me to live over.  
 There rose no day, there roll'd no hour  
 Of pleasure unembitter'd ;  
 And not a trapping deck'd my power  
 That gall'd not while it glitter'd.

## III

The serpent of the field, by art  
 And spells, is won from harming ;  
 But that which coils around the heart,  
 Oh ! who hath power of charming ? 20  
 It will not list to wisdom's lore,  
 Nor music's voice can lure it ;  
 But there it stings for evermore  
 The soul that must endure it.

# WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS SUFFERING CLAY

## I

WHEN coldness wraps this suffering clay,  
 Ah ! whither strays the immortal mind ?  
 It cannot die, it cannot stay,  
 But leaves its darken'd dust behind.  
 Then, unembodied, doth it trace  
 By steps each planet's heavenly way ?  
 Or fill at once the realms of space,  
 A thing of eyes, that all survey ?

## II

Eternal, boundless, undecay'd,  
 A thought unseen, but seeing all, 10  
 All, all in earth or skies display'd,  
 Shall it survey, shall it recall :

## 36 COLDNESS WRAPS THIS SUFFERING CLAY

Each fainter trace that memory holds  
So darkly of departed years,  
In one broad glance the soul beholds,  
And all, that was, at once appears.

### III

Before Creation peopled earth,  
Its eye shall roll through chaos back ;  
And where the furthest heaven had birth,  
The spirit trace its rising track. 20  
And where the future mars or makes,  
Its glance dilate o'er all to be,  
While sun is quench'd or system breaks,  
Fix'd in its own eternity.

### IV

Above or Love, Hope, Hate, or Fear,  
It lives all passionless and pure :  
An age shall fleet like earthly year ;  
Its years as moments shall endure.  
Away, away, without a wing,  
O'er all, through all, its thought shall fly, 30  
A nameless and eternal thing,  
Forgetting what it was to die.

## VISION OF BELSHAZZAR

### I

THE King was on his throne,  
The Satraps throng'd the hall :  
A thousand bright lamps shone  
O'er that high festival.  
A thousand cups of gold,  
In Judah deem'd divine—  
Jehovah's vessels hold  
The godless Heathen's wine !

## II

In that same hour and hall,  
The fingers of a hand  
Came forth against the wall,  
And wrote as if on sand :  
The fingers of a man ;—  
A solitary hand  
Along the letters ran,  
And traced them like a wand.

10

## III

The monarch saw, and shook,  
And bade no more rejoice ;  
All bloodless wax'd his look,  
And tremulous his voice.  
“ Let the men of lore appear,  
The wisest of the earth,  
And expound the words of fear,  
Which mar our royal mirth.”

20

## IV

Chaldea's seers are good,  
But here they have no skill ;  
And the unknown letters stood  
Untold and awful still.  
And Babel's men of age  
Are wise and deep in lore ;  
But now they were not sage,  
They saw—but knew no more.

30

## V

A captive in the land,  
A stranger and a youth,  
He heard the king's command,  
He saw that writing's truth.  
The lamps around were bright,  
The prophecy in view ;  
He read it on that night,—  
The morrow proved it true.

40



## VI

“ Belshazzar’s grave is made,  
 His kingdom pass’d away,  
 He, in the balance weigh’d,  
 Is light and worthless clay ;  
 The shroud his robe of state,  
 His canopy the stone ;  
 The Mede is at his gate !  
 The Persian on his throne ! ”

## ✓ SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS !

SUN of the sleepless ! melancholy star !  
 Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,  
 That show’st the darkness thou canst not dispel,  
 How like art thou to joy remember’d well !  
 So gleams the past, the light of other days,  
 Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays ;  
 A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,  
 Distinct, but distant—clear—but, oh how cold !

WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS THOU DEEM’ST  
IT TO BE

## I

WERE my bosom as false as thou deem’st it to be,  
 I need not have wander’d from far Galilee ;  
 It was but abjuring my creed to efface  
 The curse which, thou say’st, is the crime of my race.

## II

If the bad never triumph, then God is with thee !  
 If the slave only sin, thou art spotless and free !  
 If the Exile on earth is an Outcast on high,  
 Live on in thy faith, but in mine I will die.

8

## III

I have lost for that faith more than thou canst bestow,  
 As the God who permits thee to prosper doth know ;  
 In his hand is my heart and my hope—and in thine  
 The land and the life which for him I resign.

## HEROD'S LAMENT FOR MARIAMNE

## I

Oh, Mariamne ! now for thee  
 The heart for which thou bled'st is bleeding ;  
 Revenge is lost in agony,  
 And wild remorse to rage succeeding.  
 Oh, Mariamne ! where art thou ?  
 Thou canst not hear my bitter pleading :  
 Ah ! could'st thou—thou would'st pardon now,  
 Though Heaven were to my prayer unheeding.

## II

And is she dead ?—and did they dare  
 Obey my frenzy's jealous raving ? 10  
 My wrath but doom'd my own despair :  
 The sword that smote her 's o'er me waving.—  
 But thou art cold, my murder'd love !  
 And this dark heart is vainly craving  
 For her who soars alone above,  
 And leaves my soul unworthy saving.

## III

She 's gone, who shared my diadem ;  
 She sunk, with her my joys entombing ;  
 I swept that flower from Judah's stem,  
 Whose leaves for me alone were blooming ; 20  
 And mine 's the guilt, and mine the hell,  
 This bosom's desolation dooming ;  
 And I have earn'd those tortures well,  
 Which unconsumed are still consuming !

ON THE DAY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF  
JERUSALEM BY TITUS

## I

From the last hill that looks on thy once holy dome,  
 I beheld thee, oh Sion ! when render'd to Rome :  
 'Twas thy last sun went down, and the flames of thy fall  
 Flash'd back on the last glance I gave to thy wall.

## 40 DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM BY TITUS

### II

I look'd for thy temple, I look'd for my home,  
And forgot for a moment my bondage to come ;  
I beheld but the death-fire that fed on thy fane,  
And the fast-fetter'd hands that made vengeance in vain.

### III

On many an eve, the high spot whence I gazed  
Had reflected the last beam of day as it blazed ;      10  
While I stood on the height, and beheld the decline  
Of the rays from the mountain that shone on thy shrine.

### IV

And now on that mountain I stood on that day,  
But I mark'd not the twilight beam melting away ;  
Oh ! would that the lightning had glared in its stead,  
And the thunderbolt burst on the conqueror's head !

### V

But the gods of the Pagan shall never profane  
The shrine where Jehovah disdain'd not to reign ;  
And scatter'd and scorn'd as thy people may be,  
Our worship, oh Father ! is only for thee.      20

## BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT DOWN AND WEPT

### I

WE sat down and wept by the waters  
Of Babel, and thought of the day  
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,  
Made Salem's high places his prey ;  
And ye, oh her desolate daughters !  
Were scatter'd all weeping away.

### II

While sadly we gazed on the river  
Which roll'd on in freedom below,  
They demanded the song ; but, oh never  
That triumph the stranger shall know !      10  
May this right hand be wither'd for ever,  
Ere it string our high harp for the foe !



III

On the willow that harp is suspended,  
 Oh Salem ! its sound should be free ;  
 And the hour when thy glories were ended  
 But left me that token of thee :  
 And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended  
 With the voice of the spoiler by me !

✓ THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

I

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,  
 And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold ;  
 And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,  
 When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

II

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,  
 That host with their banners at sunset were seen :  
 Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,  
 That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

III

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,  
 And breath'd in the face of the foe as he pass'd ; 10  
 And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,  
 And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew  
 still !

IV

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,  
 But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride ;  
 And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,  
 And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

V

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,  
 With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail :  
 And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,  
 The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown. 20



## VI

And the widows of Asshur are loud in their wail,  
 And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal ;  
 And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,  
 Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord !

## A SPIRIT PASS'D BEFORE ME

FROM JOB

## I

A SPIRIT pass'd before me : I beheld  
 The face of immortality unveil'd—  
 Deep sleep came down on every eye save mine—  
 And there it stood,—all formless—but divine : ..  
 Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake ;  
 And as my damp hair stiffen'd, thus it spake :

## II

“ Is man more just than God ? Is man more pure  
 Than he who deems even Seraphs insecure ?  
 Creatures of clay—vain dwellers in the dust !  
 The moth survives you, and are ye more just ? 10  
 Things of a day ! you wither ere the night,  
 Heedless and blind to Wisdom's wasted light ! ”

## ✓ STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters  
 With a magic like thee ;  
 And like music on the waters  
 Is thy sweet voice to me :  
 When, as if its sound were causing  
 The charmed ocean's pausing,  
 The waves lie still and gleaming,  
 And the lull'd winds seem dreaming :

And the midnight moon is weaving  
 Her bright chain o'er the deep ;  
 Whose breast is gently heaving,  
 As an infant's asleep :  
 So the spirit bows before thee,  
 To listen and adore thee ;  
 With a full but soft emotion,  
 Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

10

## STANZAS FOR MUSIC

“ O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros  
 Ducentium ortus ex animo : quater  
 Felix ! in imo qui scatentem  
 Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit.”

GRAY'S *Poemata*.

✓  
**THERE** 's not a joy the world can give like that it takes  
 away,  
 When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull  
 decay ;  
 'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which  
 fades so fast,  
 But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself  
 be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of  
 happiness  
 Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess :  
 The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in vain  
 The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never stretch  
 again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself  
 comes down ;  
 It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream its  
 own ;  
 That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our  
 tears,  
 And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the ice  
 appears.

10

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth dis-  
tract the breast,  
Through midnight hours that yield no more their former  
hope of rest ;  
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret wreath,  
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and grey  
beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I have been,  
Or weep as I could once have wept o'er many a vanish'd  
scene ;

As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish  
though they be,

So, midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears would  
flow to me.

20  
*March, 1815.*

### ODE FROM THE FRENCH

I

WE do not curse thee, Waterloo !  
Though Freedom's blood thy plain bedew ;  
There 'twas shed, but is not sunk—  
Rising from each gory trunk,  
Like the water-spout from ocean,  
With a strong and growing motion—  
It soars, and mingles in the air,  
With that of lost Labedoyère—  
With that of him whose honour'd grave  
Contains the “ bravest of the brave.”  
A crimson cloud it spreads and glows,  
But shall return to whence it rose ;  
When 'tis full 'twill burst asunder—  
Never yet was heard such thunder  
As then shall shake the world with wonder—  
Never yet was seen such lightning  
As o'er heaven shall then be bright'ning !  
Like the Wormwood Star foretold  
By the sainted Seer of old,  
Show'ring down a fiery flood,  
Turning rivers into blood.

10

20



## II

The Chief has fallen, but not by you,  
Vanquishers of Waterloo !  
When the soldier citizen  
Sway'd not o'er his fellow-men—  
Save in deeds that led them on  
Where Glory smiled on Freedom's son—  
Who, of all the despots banded,

With that youthful chief competed ?

Who could boast o'er France defeated,  
Till lone Tyranny commanded ?  
Till, goaded by ambition's sting,  
The Hero sunk into the King ?  
Then he fell :—so perish all,  
Who would men by man enthrall !

30

## III

And thou, too, of the snow-white plume !  
Whose realm refused thee ev'n a tomb ;  
Better hadst thou still been leading  
France o'er hosts of hirelings bleeding,  
Than sold thyself to death and shame  
For a meanly royal name ;  
Such as he of Naples wears,  
Who thy blood-bought title bears.  
Little didst thou deem, when dashing

On thy war-horse through the ranks,  
Like a stream which burst its banks,  
While helmets cleft, and sabres clashing,  
Shone and shiver'd fast around thee—  
Of the fate at last which found thee :  
Was that haughty plume laid low  
By a slave's dishonest blow ?

Once—as the moon sways o'er the tide,  
It roll'd in air, the warrior's guide ;  
Through the smoke-created night  
Of the black and sulphurous fight,  
The soldier raised his seeking eye  
To catch that crest's ascendancy,—

40

50



And, as it onward rolling rose,  
 So moved his heart upon our foes.  
 There, where death's brief pang was quickest, 60  
 And the battle's wreck lay thickest,  
 Strew'd beneath the advancing banner  
 Of the eagle's burning crest—  
 (There with thunder-clouds to fan her,  
*Who* could then her wing arrest—  
 Victory beaming from her breast ?)  
 While the broken line enlarging  
 Fell, or fled along the plain ;  
 There be sure was Murat charging !  
 There he ne'er shall charge again ! 70

## IV

O'er glories gone the invaders march,  
 Weeps Triumph o'er each levell'd arch—  
 But let Freedom rejoice,  
 With her heart in her voice ;  
 But, her hand on her sword,  
 Doubly shall she be adored ;  
 France hath twice too well been taught  
 The "moral lesson" dearly bought—  
 Her safety sits not on a throne,  
 With Capet or Napoleon ! 80  
 But in equal rights and laws,  
 Hearts and hands in one great cause—  
 Freedom, such as God hath given  
 Unto all beneath his heaven,  
 With their breath, and from their birth,  
 Though guilt would sweep it from the earth ;  
 With a fierce and lavish hand  
 Scattering nations' wealth like sand ;  
 Pouring nations' blood like water,  
 In imperial seas of slaughter ! 90

## V

But the heart and the mind,  
 And the voice of mankind,  
 Shall arise in communion—  
 And who shall resist that proud union ?

The time is past when swords subdued—  
 Man may die—the soul's renew'd :  
 Even in this low world of care  
 Freedom ne'er shall want an heir ;  
 Millions breathe but to inherit  
 Her for ever bounding spirit—  
 When once more her hosts assemble,  
 Tyrants shall believe and tremble—  
 Smile they at this idle threat ?  
 Crimson tears will follow yet.

100

NAPOLEON'S FAREWELL

[FROM THE FRENCH]

I

FAREWELL to the Land where the gloom of my Glory  
 Arose and o'ersadow'd the earth with her name—  
 She abandons me now—but the page of her story,  
 The brightest or blackest, is fill'd with my fame.  
 I have warr'd with a world which vanquish'd me only  
 When the meteor of conquest allured me too far ;  
 I have coped with the nations which dread me thus  
     lonely,  
 The last single Captive to millions in war.

II

Farewell to thee, France ! when thy diadem crown'd  
     me,  
 I made thee the gem and the wonder of earth,      10  
 But thy weakness decrees I should leave as I found  
     thee,  
 Decay'd in thy glory, and sunk in thy worth.  
 Oh ! for the veteran hearts that were wasted  
 In strife with the storm, when their battles were won—  
 Then the Eagle, whose gaze in that moment was  
     blasted,  
 Had still soar'd with eyes fix'd on victory's sun !

## III

Farewell to thee, France!—but when Liberty rallies  
 Once more in thy regions, remember me then,—  
 The violet still grows in the depth of thy valleys;  
 Though wither'd, thy tear will unfold it again— 20  
 Yet, yet, I may baffle the hosts that surround us,  
 And yet may thy heart leap awake to my voice—  
 There are links which must break in the chain that has  
     bound us,  
*Then* turn thee and call on the Chief of thy choice!

## FARE THEE WELL

FARE thee well! and if for ever,  
     Still for ever, fare thee well:  
 Even though unforgiving, never  
     'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee  
     Where thy head so oft hath lain,  
 While that placid sleep came o'er thee  
     Which thou ne'er canst know again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,  
     Every inmost thought could show! 10  
 Then thou wouldst at last discover  
     'Twas not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend thee—  
     Though it smile upon the blow,  
 Even its praises must offend thee,  
     Founded on another's woe:

Though my many faults defaced me,  
     Could no other arm be found,  
 Than the one which once embraced me,  
     To inflict a cureless wound? 20

• Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not;  
     Love may sink by slow decay,  
 But by sudden wrench, believe not  
     Hearts can thus be torn away:



Still thine own its life retaineth,  
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat ;  
And the undying thought which paineth  
Is—that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow  
Than the wail above the dead ;  
Both shall live, but every morrow  
Wake us from a widow'd bed.

30

And when thou wouldst solace gather,  
When our child's first accents flow,  
Wilt thou teach her to say " Father ! "  
Though his care she must forego ?

When her little hands shall press thee,  
When her lip to thine is press'd,  
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,  
Think of him thy love had bless'd !

40

Should her lineaments resemble  
Those thou never more may'st see,  
Then thy heart will softly tremble  
With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,  
All my madness none can know ;  
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,  
Wither, yet with *thee* they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken ;  
Pride, which not a world could bow,  
Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,  
Even my soul forsakes me now :

50

But 'tis done—all words are idle—  
Words from me are vainer still ;  
But the thoughts we cannot bridlo  
Force their way without the will.



## FARE THEE WELL

Fare thee well ! thus disunited,  
 Torn from every nearer tie,  
 Sear'd in heart, and lone, and blighted,  
 More than this I scarce can die.

60

*March 17, 1816.*

# ENDORSEMENT TO THE DEED OF SEPARATION

IN THE APRIL OF 1816

A YEAR ago, you swore, fond she !  
 " To love, to honour," and so forth :  
 Such was the vow you pledged to me,  
 And here's exactly what 'tis worth.

# STANZAS TO AUGUSTA

## I

WHEN all around grew drear and dark,  
 And reason half withheld her ray—  
 And hope but shed a dying spark  
 Which more misled my lonely way ;

## II

In that deep midnight of the mind,  
 And that internal strife of heart,  
 When dreading to be deem'd too kind,  
 The weak despair—the cold depart ;

## III

When fortune changed—and love fled far,  
 And hatred's shafts flew thick and fast,  
 Thou wert the solitary star  
 Which rose and set not to the last.

10

## IV

Oh ! blest be thine unbroken light !  
 That watch'd me as a seraph's eye,  
 And stood between me and the night,  
 For ever shining sweetly nigh.

## V

And when the cloud upon us came,  
Which strove to blacken o'er thy ray—  
Then purer spread its gentle flame,  
And dash'd the darkness all away.

20

## VI

Still may thy spirit dwell on mine,  
And teach it what to brave or brook—  
There's more in one soft word of thine  
Than in the world's defied rebuke.

## VII

Thou stood'st, as stands a lovely tree,  
That still unbroke, though gently bent,  
Still waves with fond fidelity  
Its boughs above a monument.

## VIII

The winds might rend—the skies might pour,  
But there thou wert—and still wouldst be  
Devoted in the stormiest hour  
To shed thy weeping leaves o'er me.

## IX

But thou and thine shall know no blight,  
Whatever fate on me may fall ;  
For Heaven in sunshine will requite  
The kind—and thee the most of all.

## X

Then let the ties of baffled love  
Be broken—thine will never break ;  
Thy heart can feel—but will not move ;  
Thy soul, though soft, will never shake.

40

## XI

And these, when all was lost beside,  
Were found and still are fix'd in thee ;—  
And bearing still a breast so tried,  
Earth is no desert—ev'n to me.

## STANZAS TO AUGUSTA

## I

THOUGH the day of my destiny's over,  
 And the star of my fate hath declined,  
 Thy soft heart refused to discover  
 The faults which so many could find ;  
 Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,  
 It shrunk not to share it with me,  
 And the love which my spirit hath painted  
 It never hath found but in *thee*.

## II

Then when nature around me is smiling,  
 The last smile which answers to mine,  
 I do not believe it beguiling,  
 Because it reminds me of thine ;  
 And when winds are at war with the ocean,  
 As the breasts I believed in with me,  
 If their billows excite an emotion,  
 It is that they bear me from *thee*.

10

## III

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,  
 And its fragments are sunk in the wave,  
 Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd  
 To pain—it shall not be its slave.  
 There is many a pang to pursue me :  
 They may crush, but they shall not contemn ;  
 They may torture, but shall not subdue me ;  
 'Tis of *thee* that I think—not of them.

20

## IV

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,  
 Though woman, thou didst not forsake,  
 Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,  
 Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake ;  
 Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,  
 Though parted, it was not to fly,  
 Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,  
 Nor, mute, that the world might belie.

30



## V

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,  
 Nor the war of the many with one ;  
 If my soul was not fitted to prize it,  
 'Twas folly not sooner to shun :  
 And if dearly that error hath cost me,  
 And more than I once could foresee,  
 I have found that, whatever it lost me,  
 It could not deprive me of *thee*.

40

## VI

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,  
 Thus much I at least may recall,  
 It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd  
 Deserved to be dearest of all :  
 In the desert a fountain is springing,  
 In the wide waste there still is a tree,  
 And a bird in the solitude singing,  
 Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

July 24, 1816.

## EPISTLE TO AUGUSTA

## I

My sister ! my sweet sister ! if a name  
 Dearer and purer were, it should be thine ;  
 Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim  
 No tears, but tenderness to answer mine :  
 Go where I will, to me thou art the same—  
 A loved regret which I would not resign.  
 There yet are two things in my destiny,—  
 A world to roam through, and a home with thee.

## II

The first were nothing—had I still the last,  
 It were the haven of my happiness ;  
 But other claims and other ties thou hast,  
 And mine is not the wish to make them less.  
 A strange doom is thy father's son's, and past  
 Recalling, as it lies beyond redress ;  
 Reversed for him our grandsire's fate of yore,—  
 He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.

10



## III

If my inheritance of storms hath been  
 In other elements, and on the rocks  
 Of perils, overlook'd or unforeseen,  
 I have sustain'd my share of worldly shocks, 20  
 The fault was mine ; nor do I seek to screen  
 My errors with defensive paradox ;  
 I have been cunning in mine overthrow,  
 The careful pilot of my proper woe.

## IV

Mine were my faults, and mine be their reward.  
 My whole life was a contest, since the day  
 That gave me being, gave me that which marr'd  
 The gift,—a fate, or will, that walk'd astray ;  
 And I at times have found the struggle hard,  
 And thought of shaking off my bonds of clay : 30  
 But now I fain would for a time survive,  
 If but to see what next can well arrive.

## V

Kingdoms and empires in my little day  
 I have outlived, and yet I am not old ;  
 And when I look on this, the petty spray  
 Of my own years of trouble, which have roll'd  
 Like a wild bay of breakers, melts away :  
 Something—I know not what—does still uphold  
 A spirit of slight patience ;—not in vain,  
 Even for its own sake, do we purchase pain. 40

## VI

Perhaps the workings of defiance stir  
 Within me—or perhaps a cold despair,  
 Brought on when ills habitually recur,—  
 Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air,  
 (For even to this may change of soul refer,  
 And with light armour we may learn to bear,)  
 Have taught me a strange quiet, which was not  
 The chief companion of a calmer lot.

## VII

I feel almost at times as I have felt  
 In happy childhood ; trees, and flowers, and brooks,  
 Which do remember me of where I dwelt 51  
 Ere my young mind was sacrificed to books,  
 Come as of yore upon me, and can melt  
 My heart with recognition of their looks ;  
 And even at moments I could think I see  
 Some living thing to love—but none like thee.

## VIII

Here are the Alpine landscapes which create  
 A fund for contemplation ;—to admire  
 Is a brief feeling of a trivial date ;  
 But something worthier do such scenes inspire : 60  
 Here to be lonely is not desolate,  
 For much I view which I could most desire,  
 And, above all, a lake I can behold  
 Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.

## IX

Oh that thou wert but with me !—but I grow  
 The fool of my own wishes, and forget  
 The solitude which I have vaunted so  
 Has lost its praise in this but one regret ;  
 There may be others which I less may show ;—  
 I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet 70  
 I feel an ebb in my philosophy,  
 And the tide rising in my alter'd eye.

## X

I did remind thee of our own dear Lake,  
 By the old Hall which may be mine no more.  
 Leman's is fair ; but think not I forsake  
 The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore :  
 Sad havoc Time must with my memory make,  
 Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes before ;  
 Though, like all things which I have loved, they are  
 Resign'd for ever, or divided far. 80

## XI

The world is all before me ; I but ask  
 Of Nature that with which she will comply—  
 It is but in her summer's sun to bask,  
 To mingle with the quiet of her sky,  
 To see her gentle face without a mask,  
 And never gaze on it with apathy.  
 She was my early friend, and now shall be  
 My sister—till I look again on thee.

## XII

I can reduce all feelings but this one ;  
 And that I would not ;—for at length I see  
 Such scenes as those wherein my life begun. 90  
 The earliest—even the only paths for me—  
 Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to shun,  
 I had been better than I now can be ;  
 The passions which have torn me would have slept ;  
 I had not suffer'd, and *thou* hadst not wept.

## XIII

With false Ambition what had I to do ?  
 Little with Love, and least of all with Fame ;  
 And yet they came unsought, and with me grew,  
 And made me all which they can make—a name.  
 Yet this was not the end I did pursue ; 101  
 Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.  
 But all is over—I am one the more  
 To baffled millions which have gone before.

## XIV

And for the future, this world's future may  
 From me demand but little of my care ;  
 I have outlived myself by many a day ;  
 Having survived so many things that were ;  
 My years have been no slumber, but the prey  
 Of ceaseless vigils ; for I had the share  
 Of life which might have fill'd a century, 110  
 Before its fourth in time had pass'd me by.



## XV

And for the remnant which may be to come  
 I am content ; and for the past I feel  
 Not thankless,—for within the crowded sum  
 Of struggles, happiness at times would steal,  
 And for the present, I would not benumb  
 My feelings further.—Nor shall I conceal  
 That with all this I still can look around,  
 And worship Nature with a thought profound.

120

## XVI

For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy heart  
 I know myself secure, as thou in mine ;  
 We were and are—I am, even as thou art—  
 Beings who ne'er each other can resign ;  
 It is the same, together or apart,  
 From life's commencement to its slow decline  
 We are entwined—let death come slow or fast,  
 The tie which bound the first endures the last !

## THE DREAM

## I

OUR life is two-fold : Sleep hath its own world,  
 A boundary between the things misnamed  
 Death and existence : Sleep hath its own world,  
 And a wide realm of wild reality.  
 And dreams in their development have breath,  
 And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy ;  
 They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,  
 They take a weight from off our waking toils,  
 They do divide our being ; they become  
 A portion of ourselves as of our time,  
 And look like heralds of eternity ;  
 They pass like spirits of the past,—they speak  
 Like Sibyls of the future : they have power—  
 The tyranny of pleasure and of pain ;  
 They make us what we were not—what they will,  
 And shake us with the vision that's gone by,  
 The dread of vanish'd shadows—Are they so ?

10

Is not the past all shadow ?—What are they ?  
 Creations of the mind ?—The mind can make  
 Substance, and people planets of its own  
 With beings brighter than have been, and give  
 A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.  
 I would recall a vision which I dream'd  
 Perchance in sleep—for in itself a thought,  
 A slumbering thought, is capable of years,  
 And curdles a long life into one hour.

20

## II

I saw two beings in the hues of youth  
 Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,  
 Green and of mild declivity, the last  
 As 'twere the cape of a long ridge of such,  
 Save that there was no sea to lave its base,  
 But a most living landscape, and the wave  
 Of woods and corn-fields, and the abodes of men  
 Scatter'd at intervals, and wreathing smoke  
 Arising from such rustic roofs ;—the hill  
 Was crown'd with a peculiar diadem  
 Of trees, in circular array, so fix'd,  
 Not by the sport of nature, but of man :  
 These two, a maiden and a youth, were there  
 Gazing—the one on all that was beneath  
 Fair as herself—but the boy gazed on her ;  
 And both were young, and one was beautiful :  
 And both were young—yet not alike in youth.  
 As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge,  
 The maid was on the eve of womanhood ;  
 The boy had fewer summers, but his heart  
 Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye  
 There was but one beloved face on earth,  
 And that was shining on him : he had look'd  
 Upon it till it could not pass away ;  
 He had no breath, no being, but in hers ;  
 She was his voice ; he did not speak to her,  
 But trembled on her words ; she was his sight,  
 For his eye follow'd hers, and saw with hers,  
 Which colour'd all his objects :—he had ceased

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To live within himself ; she was his life,  
 The ocean to the river of his thoughts,  
 Which terminated all : upon a tone,  
 A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,  
 And his cheek change tempestuously—his heart 60  
 Unknowing of its cause of agony.  
 But she in these fond feelings had no share :  
 Her sighs were not for him ; to her he was  
 Even as a brother—but no more ; 'twas much,  
 For brotherless she was, save in the name  
 Her infant friendship had bestow'd on him ;  
 Herself the solitary scion left  
 Of a time-honour'd race.—It was a name  
 Which pleased him, and yet pleased him not—and  
 why ?  
 Time taught him a deep answer—when she loved 70  
 Another ; even *now* she loved another,  
 And on the summit of that hill she stood  
 Looking afar if yet her lover's steed  
 Kept pace with her expectancy, and flew.

## III

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.  
 There was an ancient mansion, and before  
 Its walls there was a steed caparison'd :  
 Within an antique Oratory stood  
 The Boy of whom I spake ;—he was alone,  
 And pale, and pacing to and fro : anon 80  
 He sate him down, and seized a pen, and traced  
 Words which I could not guess of ; then he lean'd  
 His bow'd head on his hands, and shook as 'twere  
 With a convulsion—then arose again,  
 And with his teeth and quivering hands did tear  
 What he had written, but he shed no tears,  
 And he did calm himself, and fix his brow  
 Into a kind of quiet : as he paused,  
 The Lady of his love re-entered there ;  
 She was serene and smiling then, and yet 90  
 She knew she was by him beloved,—she knew,  
 For quickly comes such knowledge, that his heart



Was darken'd with her shadow, and she saw  
 That he was wretched, but she saw not all.  
 He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp  
 He took her hand ; a moment o'er his face  
 A tablet of unutterable thoughts  
 Was traced, and then it faded, as it came ;  
 He dropp'd the hand he held, and with slow steps  
 Retired, but not as bidding her adieu, 100  
 For they did part with mutual smiles ; he pass'd  
 From out the massy gate of that old Hall,  
 And mounting on his steed he went his way ;  
 And ne'er repass'd that hoary threshold more.

## IV

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.  
 The Boy was sprung to manhood : in the wilds  
 Of fiery climes he made himself a home,  
 And his soul drank their sunbeams : he was girt  
 With strange and dusky aspects ; he was not  
 Himself like what he had been ; on the sea 110  
 And on the shore he was a wanderer :  
 There was a mass of many images  
 Crowded like waves upon me, but he was  
 A part of all ; and in the last he lay  
 Reposing from the noontide sultriness,  
 Couch'd among fallen columns, in the shade  
 Of ruin'd walls that had survived the names  
 Of those who rear'd them ; by his sleeping side  
 Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds  
 Were fasten'd near a fountain ; and a man 120  
 Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,  
 While many of his tribe slumber'd around :  
 And they were canopied by the blue sky,  
 So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,  
 That God alone was to be seen in heaven.

## V

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.  
 The Lady of his love was wed with One  
 Who did not love her better :—in her home,

A thousand leagues from his,—her native home,  
 She dwelt, begirt with growing Infancy, 130  
 Daughters and sons of Beauty,—but behold !  
 Upon her face there was the tint of grief,  
 The settled shadow of an inward strife,  
 And an unquiet drooping of the eye,  
 As if its lid were charged with unshed tears.  
 What could her grief be ?—she had all she loved,  
 And he who had so loved her was not there  
 To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,  
 Or ill-repress'd affliction, her pure thoughts.  
 What could her grief be ?—she had loved him not, 141  
 Nor given him cause to deem himself beloved,  
 Nor could he be a part of that which prey'd  
 Upon her mind—a spectre of the past.

## VI

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.  
 The Wanderer was return'd.—I saw him stand  
 Before an Altar—with a gentle bride ;  
 Her face was fair, but was not that which made  
 The Starlight of his Boyhood ;—as he stood  
 Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came  
 The self-same aspect, and the quivering shock 150  
 That in the antique Oratory shook  
 His bosom in its solitude ; and then—  
 As in that hour—a moment o'er his face  
 The tablet of unutterable thoughts  
 Was traced,—and then it faded as it came,  
 And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke  
 The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,  
 And all things reel'd around him ; he could see  
 Not that which was, nor that which should have been—  
 But the old mansion, and the accustom'd hall, 160  
 And the remember'd chambers, and the place,  
 The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,  
 All things pertaining to that place and hour,  
 And her who was his destiny,—came back  
 And thrust themselves between him and the light :  
 What business had they there at such a time ?



## VII

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.  
 The Lady of his love :—Oh ! she was changed  
 As by the sickness of the soul ; her mind  
 Had wander'd from its dwelling, and her eyes  
 They had not their own lustre, but the look  
 Which is not of the earth ; she was become  
 The queen of a fantastic realm ; her thoughts  
 Were combinations of disjointed things ;  
 And forms impalpable and unperceived  
 Of others' sight familiar were to hers.  
 And this the world calls frenzy ; but the wise  
 Have a far deeper madness, and the glance  
 Of melancholy is a fearful gift ;  
 What is it but the telescope of truth ?  
 Which strips the distance of its fantasies,  
 And brings life near in utter nakedness,  
 Making the cold reality too real !

170

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## VIII

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.  
 The Wanderer was alone as heretofore,  
 The beings which surrounded him were gone,  
 Or were at war with him ; he was a mark  
 For blight and desolation, compass'd round  
 With Hatred and Contention ; Pain was mix'd  
 In all which was served up to him, until,  
 Like to the Pontic monarch of old days,  
 He fed on poisons, and they had no power,  
 But were a kind of nutriment ; he lived  
 Through that which had been death to many men,  
 And made him friends of mountains : with the stars  
 And the quick Spirit of the Universe  
 He held his dialogues ; and they did teach  
 To him the magic of their mysteries ;  
 To him the book of Night was open'd wide,  
 And voices from the deep abyss reveal'd  
 A marvel and a secret—Be it so.

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## IX

My dream was past ; it had no further change.  
 It was of a strange order, that the doom  
 Of these two creatures should be thus traced out  
 Almost like a reality—the one  
 To end in madness—both in misery.

*July, 1816.*

LINES ON HEARING THAT LADY BYRON  
 WAS ILL

AND thou wert sad—yet I was not with thee ;  
 And thou wert sick, and yet I was not near ;  
 Methought that joy and health alone could be  
 Where I was *not*—and pain and sorrow here !  
 And is it thus ?—it is as I foretold,  
 And shall be more so ; for the mind recoils  
 Upon itself, and the wreck'd heart lies cold,  
 While heaviness collects the shatter'd spoils.  
 It is not in the storm nor in the strife  
 We feel benumb'd, and wish to be no more,  
 But in the after-silence on the shore,  
 When all is lost, except a little life.

10

I am too well avenged !—but 'twas my right ;  
 Whate'er my sins might be, *thou* wert not sent  
 To be the Nemesis who should requite—  
 Nor did Heaven choose so near an instrument.  
 Mercy is for the merciful !—if thou  
 Hast been of such, 'twill be accorded now.  
 Thy nights are banish'd from the realms of sleep !—  
 Yes ! they may flatter thee, but thou shalt feel 20  
 A hollow agony which will not heal,  
 For thou art pillow'd on a curse too deep ;  
 Thou hast sown in my sorrow, and must reap  
 The bitter harvest in a woe as real !  
 I have had many foes, but none like thee ;  
 For 'gainst the rest myself I could defend,  
 And be avenged, or turn them into friend :  
 But thou in safe implacability

## 64 HEARING THAT LADY BYRON WAS ILL

Hadst nought to dread—in thy own weakness shielded,  
And in my love, which hath but too much yielded, 30

And spared, for thy sake, some I should not spare ;  
And thus upon the world—trust in thy truth,  
And the wild fame of my ungovern'd youth—

On things that were not, and on things that are—  
Even upon such a basis hast thou built

A monument, whose cement hath been guilt!

The moral Clytemnestra of thy lord,

And hew'd down, with an unsuspected sword,  
Fame, peace, and hope—and all the better life,

Which, but for this cold treason of thy heart, 40  
Might still have risen from out the grave of strife,

And found a nobler duty than to part.

But of thy virtues didst thou make a vice,

Trafficking with them in a purpose cold,

For present anger, and for future gold—

And buying other's grief at any price.

And thus once enter'd into crooked ways,

The early truth, which was thy proper praise,

Did not still walk beside thee—but at times,

And with a breast unknowing its own crimes, 50  
Deceit, averments incompatible,

Equivocations, and the thoughts which dwell

In Janus-spirits—the significant eye

Which learns to lie with silence—the pretext

Of prudence, with advantages annex'd—

The acquiescence in all things which tend,

No matter how, to the desired end—

All found a place in thy philosophy.

The means were worthy, and the end is won—

I would not do by thee as thou hast done ! 60

*September, 1816.*

## DARKNESS

I HAD a dream, which was not all a dream.

The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars

Did wander darkling in the eternal space,

Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth



Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air ;  
 Morn came and went—and came, and brought no day,  
 And men forgot their passions in the dread  
 Of this their desolation ; and all hearts  
 Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light :  
 And they did live by watchfires—and the thrones, 10  
 The palaces of crowned kings—the huts,  
 The habitations of all things which dwell,  
 Were burnt for beacons ; cities were consumed,  
 And men were gather'd round their blazing homes  
 To look once more into each other's face ;  
 Happy were those who dwelt within the eye  
 Of the volcanos, and their mountain-torch :  
 A fearful hope was all the world contain'd ;  
 Forests were set on fire—but hour by hour  
 They fell and faded—and the crackling trunks 20  
 Extinguish'd with a crash—and all was black.  
 The brows of men by the despairing light  
 Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits  
 The flashes fell upon them ; some lay down  
 And hid their eyes and wept ; and some did rest  
 Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smiled ;  
 And others hurried to and fro, and fed  
 Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd up  
 With mad disquietude on the dull sky,  
 The pall of a past world ; and then again 30  
 With curses cast them down upon the dust,  
 And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd : the wild birds  
 shriek'd,  
 And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,  
 And flap their useless wings ; the wildest brutes  
 Came tame and tremulous ; and vipers crawl'd  
 And twined themselves among the multitude,  
 Hissing, but stingless—they were slain for food !  
 And War, which for a moment was no more,  
 Did glut himself again :—a meal was bought  
 With blood, and each sate sullenly apart 40  
 Gorging himself in gloom : no love was left ;  
 All earth was but one thought—and that was death  
 Immediate and inglorious ; and the pang



Of famine fed upon all entrails—men  
Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh ;  
The meagre by the meagre were devour'd,  
Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save one,  
And he was faithful to a corse, and kept  
The birds and beasts and famish'd men at bay,  
Till hunger clung them, or the dropping dead 50  
Lured their lank jaws ; himself sought out no food,  
But with a piteous and perpetual moan,  
And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand  
Which answer'd not with a caress—he died.  
The crowd was famish'd by degrees ; but two  
Of an enormous city did survive,  
And they were enemies : they met beside  
The dying embers of an altar-place  
Where had been heap'd a mass of holy things  
For an unholy usage ; they raked up, 60  
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands  
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath  
Blew for a little life, and made a flame  
Which was a mockery ; then they lifted up  
Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld  
Each other's aspects—saw, and shriek'd, and died—  
Even of their mutual hideousness they died,  
Unknowing who he was upon whose brow  
Famine had written Fiend. The world was void,  
The populous and the powerful was a lump, 70  
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless,  
A lump of death—a chaos of hard clay.  
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,  
And nothing stirr'd within their silent depths ;  
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,  
And their masts fell down piecemeal : as they dropp'd  
They slept on the abyss without a surge—  
The waves were dead ; the tides were in their grave,  
The moon, their mistress, had expired before ;  
The winds were wither'd in the stagnant air, 80  
And the clouds perish'd ; Darkness had no need  
Of aid from them—She was the Universe.

Diodati, *July*, 1816.

## PROMETHEUS

## I

TITAN ! to whose immortal eyes  
 The sufferings of mortality,  
 Seen in their sad reality,  
 Were not as things that gods despise ;  
 What was thy pity's recompense ?  
 A silent suffering, and intense ;  
 The rock, the vulture, and the chain,  
 All that the proud can feel of pain,  
 The agony they do not show,  
 The suffocating sense of woe,  
 Which speaks but in its loneliness,  
 And then is jealous lest the sky  
 Should have a listener, nor will sigh  
 Until its voice is echoless.

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## II

Titan ! to thee the strife was given  
 Between the suffering and the will,  
 Which torture where they cannot kill ;  
 And the inexorable Heaven,  
 And the deaf tyranny of Fate,  
 The ruling principle of Hate,  
 Which for its pleasure doth create  
 The things it may annihilate,  
 Refused thee even the boon to die :  
 The wretched gift Eternity  
 Was thine—and thou hast borne it well.  
 All that the Thunderer wrung from thee  
 Was but the menace which flung back  
 On him the torments of thy rack ;  
 The fate thou didst so well foresee,  
 But would not to appease him tell ;  
 And in thy Silence was his Sentence,  
 And in his Soul a vain repentance,  
 And evil dread so ill dissembled,  
 That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

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## III

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,  
 To render with thy precepts less  
 The sum of human wretchedness,  
 And strengthen Man with his own mind ;  
 But baffled as thou wert from high,  
 Still in thy patient energy,  
 In the endurance, and repulse  
 Of thine impenetrable Spirit,  
 Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,  
 A mighty lesson we inherit :  
 Thou art a symbol and a sign  
 To Mortals of their fate and force ;  
 Like thee, Man is in part divine,  
 A troubled stream from a pure source ;  
 And Man in portions can foresee  
 His own funereal destiny ;  
 His wretchedness, and his resistance,  
 And his sad unallied existence :  
 To which his Spirit may oppose  
 Itself—and equal to all woes,  
 And a firm will, and a deep sense,  
 Which even in torture can descry  
 Its own concenter'd recompense,  
 Triumphant where it dares defy,  
 And making Death a Victory.

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Diodati, *July*, 1816

## A FRAGMENT

COULD I remount the river of my years  
 To the first fountain of our smiles and tears,  
 I would not trace again the stream of hours  
 Between their outworn banks of wither'd flowers,  
 But bid it flow as now—until it glides  
 Into the number of the nameless tides.

What is this Death ?—a quiet of the heart ?  
 The whole of that of which we are a part ?  
 For life is but a vision—what I see  
 Of all which lives alone is life to me,

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And being so—the absent are the dead,  
 Who haunt us from tranquillity, and spread  
 A dreary shroud around us, and invest  
 With sad remembrances our hours of rest.

The absent are the dead—for they are cold,  
 And ne'er can be what once we did behold ;  
 And they are changed, and cheerless,—or if yet  
 The unforgotten do not all forget,  
 Since thus divided—equal must it be  
 If the deep barrier be of earth, or sea ;  
 It may be both—but one day end it must  
 In the dark union of insensate dust.

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The under-earth inhabitants—are they  
 But mingled millions decomposed to clay ?  
 The ashes of a thousand ages spread  
 Wherever man has trodden or shall tread ?  
 Or do they in their silent cities dwell  
 Each in his incommunicative cell ?  
 Or have they their own language ? and a sense  
 Of breathless being ?—darken'd and intense  
 As midnight in her solitude ?—Oh Earth !  
 Where are the past ?—and wherefore had they birth ?  
 The dead are thy inheritors—and we  
 But bubbles on thy surface ; and the key  
 Of thy profundity is in the grave,  
 The ebon portal of thy peopled cave,  
 Where I would walk in spirit, and behold  
 Our elements resolved to things untold,  
 And fathom hidden wonders, and explore  
 The essence of great bosoms now no more.

30

40

Diodati, *July*, 1816.

## STANZAS FOR MUSIC

## I

BRIGHT be the place of thy soul !  
 No lovelier spirit than thine  
 E'er burst from its mortal control,  
 In the orbs of the blessed to shine.

## STANZAS FOR MUSIC

On earth thou wert all but divine,  
 As thy soul shall immortally be ;  
 And our sorrow may cease to repine  
 When we know that thy God is with thee.

## II

Light be the turf of thy tomb !  
 May its verdure like emeralds be !  
 There should not be the shadow of gloom  
 In aught that reminds us of thee.  
 Young flowers and an evergreen tree  
 May spring from the spot of thy rest :  
 But nor cypress nor yew let us see ;  
 For why should we mourn for the blest ?

## STANZAS FOR MUSIC

## I

THEY say that Hope is happiness ;  
 But genuine Love must prize the past,  
 And Memory wakes the thoughts that bless :  
 They rose the first—they set the last ;

## II

And all that Memory loves the most  
 Was once our only Hope to be,  
 And all that Hope adored and lost  
 Hath melted into Memory.

## III

Alas ! it is delusion all :  
 The future cheats us from afar,  
 Nor can we be what we recall,  
 Nor dare we think on what we are.

## SO, WE'LL GO NO MORE A ROVING

## I

So, we'll go no more a roving  
 So late into the night,  
 Though the heart be still as loving,  
 And the moon be still as bright.

## II

For the sword outwears its sheath,  
 And the soul wears out the breast,  
 And the heart must pause to breathe,  
 And love itself have rest.

## III

Though the night was made for loving,  
 And the day returns too soon,  
 Yet we'll go no more a roving  
 By the light of the moon.

10

1817.

## TO THOMAS MOORE

WHAT are you doing now,  
 Oh Thomas Moore ?  
 What are you doing now,  
 Oh Thomas Moore ?  
 Sighing or suing now,  
 Rhyming or wooing now,  
 Billing or cooing now,  
 Which, Thomas Moore ?

But the Carnival's coming,  
 Oh Thomas Moore !  
 The Carnival's coming,  
 Oh Thomas Moore !  
 Masking and humming,  
 Fifeing and drumming,  
 Guitarring and strumming,  
 Oh Thomas Moore !

10

## TO THOMAS MOORE

## I

My boat is on the shore,  
 And my bark is on the sea ;  
 But, before I go, Tom Moore,  
 Here 's a double health to thee !



## TO THOMAS MOORE

## II

Here's a sigh to those who love me,  
 And a smile to those who hate;  
 And, whatever sky's above me,  
 Here's a heart for every fate.

## III

Though the ocean roar around me,  
 Yet it still shall bear me on;  
 Though a desert should surround me,  
 It hath springs that may be won.

10

## IV

Were't the last drop in the well,  
 As I gasp'd upon the brink,  
 Ere my fainting spirit fell,  
 'Tis to thee that I would drink.

## V

With that water, as this wine,  
 The libation I would pour  
 Should be—peace with thine and mine,  
 And a health to thee, Tom Moore.

20

*July, 1817.*EPISTLE FROM MR. MURRAY TO  
DR. POLIDORI

DEAR Doctor, I have read your play,  
 Which is a good one in its way,—  
 Purges the eyes and moves the bowels,  
 And drenches handkerchiefs like towels  
 With tears, that, in a flux of grief,  
 Afford hysterical relief  
 To shatter'd nerves and quicken'd pulses,  
 Which your catastrophe convulses.

I like your moral and machinery;  
 Your plot, too, has such scope for scenery, 20  
 Your dialogue is apt and smart:  
 The play's concoction full of art;

Your hero raves, your heroine cries,  
 All stab, and everybody dies.  
 In short, your tragedy would be  
 The very thing to hear and see :  
 And for a piece of publication,  
 If I decline on this occasion,  
 It is not that I am not sensible  
 To merits in themselves ostensible, 20  
 But—and I grieve to speak it—plays  
 Are drugs—mere drugs, sir—now-a-days.  
 I had a heavy loss by “Manuel,”—  
 Too lucky if it prove not annual,—  
 And Sotheby, with his “Orestes,”  
 (Which, by the by, the author’s best is,)  
 Has lain so very long on hand,  
 That I despair of all demand.  
 I’ve advertised, but see my books,  
 Or only watch my shopman’s looks ;— 30  
 Still Ivan, Ina, and such lumber,  
 My back-shop glut, my shelves encumber.

There’s Byron too, who once did better,  
 Has sent me, folded in a letter,  
 A sort of—it’s no more a drama  
 Than Darnley, Ivan, or Kehama :  
 So alter’d since last year his pen is,  
 I think he’s lost his wits at Venice.  
 In short, sir, what with one and t’other,  
 I dare not venture on another. 40  
 I write in haste ; excuse each blunder ;  
 The coaches through the streets so thunder !  
 My room’s so full—we’ve Gifford here  
 Reading MS., with Hookham Frere,  
 Pronouncing on the nouns and particles  
 Of some of our forthcoming Articles.

The Quarterly—Ah, sir, if you  
 Had but the genius to review !—  
 A smart critique upon St. Helena,  
 Or if you only would but tell in a 50

Short compass what—but to resume :  
 As I was saying, sir, the room—  
 The room 's so full of wits and bards,  
 Crabbes, Campbells, Crokers, Freres, and Wards,  
 And others, neither bards nor wits :—  
 My humble tenement admits  
 All persons in the dress of gent,  
 From Mr. Hammond to Dog Dent.

A party dines with me to-day,  
 All clever men, who make their way ; 60  
 Crabbe, Malcolm, Hamilton, and Chantrey,  
 Are all partakers of my pantry.  
 They're at this moment in discussion  
 On poor De Staël's late dissolution.  
 Her book, they say, was in advance—  
 Pray Heaven, she tell the truth of France !  
 Thus run our time and tongues away ;—  
 But, to return, sir, to your play :  
 Sorry, sir, but I cannot deal,  
 Unless 'twere acted by O'Neill ; 70  
 My hands so full, my head so busy,  
 I'm almost dead, and always dizzy ;  
 And so, with endless truth and hurry,  
 Dear Doctor, I am yours,

JOHN MURRAY.  
*August, 1817.*

### TO MR. MURRAY

STRAHAN, Tonson, Lintot of the times,  
 Patron and publisher of rhymes,  
 For thee the bard up Pindus climbs,  
 My Murray.

To thee, with hope and terror dumb,  
 The unfledged MS. authors come ;  
 Thou printest all—and sellest some—  
 My Murray.



## ODE ON VENICE

75

Upon thy table's baize so green  
The last new Quarterly is seen,—  
But where is thy new Magazine,  
My Murray?

10

Along thy sprucest bookshelves shine  
The works thou deemest most divine—  
The "Art of Cookery," and mine,  
My Murray.

Tours, Travels, Essays, too, I wist,  
And Sermons, to thy mill bring grist;  
And then thou hast the "Navy List,"  
My Murray.

20

And Heaven forbid I should conclude  
Without "the Board of Longitude,"  
Although this narrow paper would,  
My Murray.

Venice, *March 25, 1818.*

## ODE ON VENICE

I

OH Venice! Venice! when thy marble walls  
Are level with the waters, there shall be  
A cry of nations o'er thy sunken halls,  
A loud lament along the sweeping sea!  
If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,  
What should thy sons do?—anything but weep:  
And yet they only murmur in their sleep.  
In contrast with their fathers—as the slime,  
The dull green ooze of the receding deep,  
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam  
That drives the sailor shipless to his home,  
Are they to those that were; and thus they creep,  
Crouching and crab-like, through their sapping streets.  
Oh! agony—that centuries should reap  
No mellow harvest! Thirteen hundred years  
Of wealth and glory turn'd to dust and tears;

10

And every monument the stranger meets,  
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets ;  
And even the Lion all subdued appears,  
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum, 20  
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats  
The echo of thy tyrant's voice along  
The soft waves, once all musical to song,  
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the throng  
Of gondolas—and to the busy hum  
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds  
Were but the overbeating of the heart,  
And flow of too much happiness, which needs  
The aid of age to turn its course apart  
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood 30  
Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.  
But these are better than the gloomy errors,  
The weeds of nations in their last decay,  
When Vice walks forth with her unsoften'd terrors,  
And Mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay ;  
And Hope is nothing but a false delay,  
The sick man's lightning half an hour ere death,  
When Faintness, the last mortal birth of Pain,  
And apathy of limb, the dull beginning  
Of the cold staggering race which Death is winning,  
Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away ; 40  
Yet so relieving the o'er-tortured clay,  
To him appears renewal of his breath,  
And freedom the mere numbness of his chain ;  
And then he talks of life, and how again  
He feels his spirit soaring—albeit weak,  
And of the fresher air, which he would seek :  
And as he whispers knows not that he gasps,  
That his thin finger feels not what it clasps,  
And so the film comes o'er him, and the dizzy 50  
Chamber swims round and round, and shadows busy,  
At which he vainly catches, flit and gleam,  
Till the last rattle chokes the strangled scream,  
And all is ice and blackness,—and the earth  
That which it was the moment ere our birth.



## II

There is no hope for nations !—Search the page  
 Of many thousand years—the daily scene,  
 The flow and ebb of each recurring age,  
 The everlasting *to be* which *hath been*,  
 Hath taught us nought, or little : still we lean 60  
 On things that rot beneath our weight, and wear  
 Our strength away in wrestling with the air :  
 For 'tis our nature strikes us down : the beasts  
 Slaughter'd in hourly hecatombs for feasts  
 Are of as high an order—they must go  
 Even where their driver goads them, though to  
 slaughter.

Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as water,  
 What have they given your children in return ?  
 A heritage of servitude and woes,  
 A blindfold bondage, where your hire is blows. 70  
 What ! do not yet the red-hot plough-shares burn,  
 O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,  
 And deem this proof of loyalty the *real* ;  
 Kissing the hand that guides you to your scars,  
 And glorying as you tread the glowing bars ?  
 All that your sires have left you, all that Time  
 Bequeaths of free, and History of sublime,  
 Spring from a different theme ! Ye see and read,  
 Admire and sigh, and then succumb and bleed !  
 Save the few spirits who, despite of all, 80  
 And worse than all, the sudden crimes engender'd  
 By the down-thundering of the prison-wall,  
 And thirst to swallow the sweet waters tender'd,  
 Gushing from Freedom's fountains, when the crowd,  
 Madden'd with centuries of drought, are loud,  
 And trample on each other to obtain  
 The cup which brings oblivion of a chain  
 Heavy and sore, in which long yoked they plough'd  
 The sand,—or if there sprung the yellow grain,  
 'Twas not for them, their necks were too much bow'd,  
 And their dead palates chew'd the cud of pain : 91  
 Yes ! the few spirits,—who, despite of deeds



Which they abhor, confound not with the cause  
 Those momentary starts from Nature's laws,  
 Which, like the pestilence and earthquake, smite  
 But for a term, then pass, and leave the earth  
 With all her seasons to repair the blight  
 With a few summers, and again put forth  
 Cities and generations—fair, when free—  
 For, Tyranny, there blooms no bud for thee !

100

## III

Glory and Empire ! once upon these towers  
 With Freedom—godlike Triad ! how ye sate !  
 The league of mightiest nations, in those hours  
 When Venice was an envy, might abate,  
 But did not quench her spirit ; in her fate  
 All were enwrapp'd : the feasted monarchs knew  
 And loved their hostess, nor could learn to hate,  
 Although they humbled—with the kingly few  
 The many felt, for from all days and climes  
 She was the voyager's worship ; even her crimes 110  
 Were of the softer order—born of Love,  
 She drank no blood, nor fatten'd on the dead,  
 But gladden'd where her harmless conquests spread ;  
 For these restored the Cross, that from above  
 Hallow'd her sheltering banners, which incessant  
 Flew between earth and the unholy Crescent,  
 Which, if it waned and dwindled, Earth may thank  
 The city it has clothed in chains, which clank  
 Now, creaking in the ears of those who owe  
 The name of Freedom to her glorious struggles ; 120  
 Yet she but shares with them a common woe,  
 And call'd the " kingdom " of a conquering foe,  
 But knows what all—and, most of all, *we* know—  
 With what set gilded terms a tyrant juggles !

## IV

The name of Commonwealth is past and gone  
 O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe ;  
 Venice is crush'd, and Holland deigns to own  
 A sceptre, and endures the purple robe ;

If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone  
 His chainless mountains, 'tis but for a time, 130  
 For tyranny of late is cunning grown,  
 And in its own good season tramples down  
 The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,  
 Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean  
 Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion  
 Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for, and  
 Bequeath'd—a heritage of heart and hand,  
 And proud distinction from each other land,  
 Whose sons must bow them at a monarch's motion, 140  
 As if his senseless sceptre were a wand  
 Full of the magic of exploded science—  
 Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,  
 Yet rears her crest, unconquer'd and sublime,  
 Above the far Atlantic!—She has taught  
 Her Esau-brethren that the haughty flag,  
 The floating fence of Albion's feeble crag,  
 May strike to those whose red right hands have bought  
 Rights cheaply earn'd with blood. Still, still, for ever,  
 Better, though each man's life-blood were a river,  
 That it should flow, and overflow, than creep 150  
 Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,  
 Damm'd like the dull canal with locks and chains,  
 And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,  
 Three paces, and then faltering:—better be  
 Where the extinguish'd Spartans still are free,  
 In their proud charnel of Thermopylae,  
 Than stagnate in our marsh,—or o'er the deep  
 Fly, and one current to the ocean add,  
 One spirit to the souls our fathers had, 160  
 One freeman more, America, to thee!

## STANZAS TO THE PO

RIVER, that rollest by the ancient walls,  
 Where dwells the lady of my love, when she  
 Walks by thy brink, and there perchance recalls  
 A faint and fleeting memory of me:



What if thy deep and ample stream should be  
 A mirror of my heart, where she may read  
 The thousand thoughts I now betray to thee,  
 Wild as thy wave, and headlong as thy speed !

What do I say—a mirror of my heart ?  
 Are not thy waters sweeping, dark, and strong ? 10  
 Such as my feelings were and are, thou art ;  
 And such as thou art were my passions long.

Time may have somewhat tamed them,—not for ever ;  
 Thou overflow'st thy banks, and not for aye  
 Thy bosom overboils, congenial river !  
 Thy floods subside, and mine have sunk away :

But left long wrecks behind, and now again,  
 Borne on our old unchanged career, we move :  
 Thou tendest wildly onwards to the main,  
 And I—to loving *one* I should not love. 20

The current I behold will sweep beneath  
 Her native walls, and murmur at her feet ;  
 Her eyes will look on thee, when she shall breathe  
 The twilight air, unharm'd by summer's heat.

She will look on thee,—I have look'd on thee,  
 Full of that thought : and, from that moment, ne'er  
 Thy waters could I dream of, name, or see,  
 Without the inseparable sigh for her !

Her bright eyes will be imaged in thy stream,  
 Yes ! they will meet the wave I gaze on now : 30  
 Mine cannot witness, even in a dream,  
 That happy wave repass me in its flow !

The wave that bears my tears returns no more :  
 Will she return by whom that wave shall sweep ?—  
 Both tread thy banks, both wander on thy shore,  
 I by thy source, she by the dark-blue deep.



# SONNET TO GEORGE THE FOURTH 81

But that which keepeth us apart is not  
 Distance, nor depth of wave, nor space of earth,  
 But the distraction of a various lot,  
 As various as the climates of our birth. 40

A stranger loves the lady of the land,  
 Born far beyond the mountains, but his blood  
 Is all meridian, as if never fann'd  
 By the black wind that chills the polar flood.

My blood is all meridian ; were it not,  
 I had not left my clime, nor should I be,  
 In spite of tortures ne'er to be forgot,  
 A slave again of love,—at least of thee.

'Tis vain to struggle—let me perish young—  
 Live as I lived, and love as I have loved ; 50  
 To dust if I return, from dust I sprung,  
 And then, at least, my heart can ne'er be moved.  
*April, 1819.*

## SONNET TO THE PRINCE REGENT, ON THE REPEAL OF LORD EDWARD FITZGERALD'S FORFEITURE

To be the father of the fatherless,  
 To stretch the hand from the throne's height, and  
 raise

*His* offspring, who expired in other days  
 To make thy sire's sway by a kingdom less,—  
 This is to be a monarch, and repress  
 Envy into unutterable praise.

Dismiss thy guard, and trust thee to such traits,  
 For who would lift a hand, except to bless ?

Were it not easy, sir, and is't not sweet  
 To make thyself beloved ? and to be  
 Omnipotent by mercy's means ? for thus  
 Thy sovereignty would grow but more complete :  
 A despot thou, and yet thy people free,  
 And by the heart, not hand, enslaving us.

*Bologna, August 12, 1819.*

## STANZAS

COULD Love for ever  
 Run like a river,  
 And Time's endeavour  
     Be tried in vain—  
 No other pleasure  
 With this could measure ;  
 And like a treasure  
     We'd hug the chain.  
 But since our sighing  
 Ends not in dying,  
 And, form'd for flying,  
     Love plumes his wing ;  
 Then for this reason  
 Let 's love a season ;  
 But let that season be only Spring.

10

When lovers parted  
 Feel broken-hearted,  
 And, all hopes thwarted,  
     Expect to die ;  
 A few years older,  
 Ah ! how much colder  
 They might behold her  
     For whom they sigh !  
 When link'd together,  
 In every weather,  
 They pluck Love's feather  
     From out his wing—  
 He'll stay for ever,  
 But sadly shiver  
 Without his plumage, when past the Spring.

20

30

Like chiefs of Faction,  
 His life is action—  
 A formal paction

That curbs his reign,  
Obscures his glory,  
Despot no more, he  
Such territory

Quits with disdain.  
Still, still advancing,  
With banners glancing,  
His power enhancing,

40

He must move on—  
Repose but cloyes him,  
Retreat destroys him,  
Love brooks not a degraded throne.

Wait not, fond lover !  
Till years are over,  
And then recover

As from a dream.  
While each bewailing  
The other's failing,  
With wrath and railing,

50

All hideous seem—  
While first decreasing,  
Yet not quite ceasing,  
Wait not till teasing

All passion blight :  
If once diminish'd,  
Love's reign is finish'd—

Then part in friendship—and bid good-night. 60

So shall Affection  
To recollection  
The dear connexion

Bring back with joy :  
You had not waited  
Till, tired or hated,  
Your passions sated  
Began to cloy.

Your last embraces  
Leave no cold traces—  
The same fond faces

70



## STANZAS

As through the past :  
 And eyes, the mirrors  
 Of your sweet errors,  
 Reflect but rapture—not least though last.

True, separations  
 Ask more than patience ;  
 What desperations  
 From such have risen !  
 But yet remaining, 80  
 What is't but chaining  
 Hearts which, once waning,  
 Beat 'gainst their prison ?  
 Time can but cloy love  
 And use destroy love :  
 The winged boy, Love,  
 Is but for boys—  
 You'll find it torture,  
 Though sharper, shorter,  
 To wean, and not wear out your joys. 90  
 1819.

## ON MY WEDDING-DAY

HERE 's a happy new year ! but with reason  
 I beg you'll permit me to say—  
 Wish me *many* returns of the *season*,  
 But as *few* as you please of the day.

January 2, 1820.

## EPITAPH FOR WILLIAM PITT

WITH death doom'd to grapple,  
 Beneath this cold slab, he  
 Who lied in the Chapel  
 Now lies in the Abbey.

January, 1820.

## STANZAS

WHEN a man hath no freedom to fight for at home,  
 Let him combat for that of his neighbours ;  
 Let him think of the glories of Greece and of Rome,  
 And get knock'd on the head for his labours.

To do good to mankind is the chivalrous plan,  
 And is always as nobly requited ;  
 Then battle for freedom wherever you can,  
 And, if not shot or hang'd, you'll get knighted.  
*November, 1820.*

## EPIGRAM

THE world is a bundle of hay,  
 Mankind are the asses who pull ;  
 Each tugs it a different way,  
 And the greatest of all is John Bull.

## THE CHARITY BALL

WHAT matter the pangs of a husband and father,  
 If his sorrows in exile be great or be small,  
 So the Pharisee's glories around her she gather,  
 And the saint patronizes her "charity ball !"  
 What matters—a heart which, though faulty, was  
 feeling,  
 Be driven to excesses which once could appal—  
 That the sinner should suffer is only fair dealing,  
 As the saint keeps her charity back for "the ball !"

## EPIGRAM

ON THE BRAZIERS' COMPANY HAVING RESOLVED TO  
 PRESENT AN ADDRESS TO QUEEN CAROLINE

THE braziers, it seems, are preparing to pass  
 An address, and present it themselves all in brass ;—  
 A superfluous pageant—for, by the Lord Harry !  
 They'll find where they're going much more than they  
 carry.

## EPIGRAM ON MY WEDDING-DAY

TO PENELOPE

THIS day, of all our days, has done  
 The worst for me and you :—  
 'Tis just *six* years since we were *one*,  
 And *five* since we were *two*.

January 2, 1821.

## ON MY THIRTY-THIRD BIRTHDAY

JANUARY 22, 1821

THROUGH life's dull road, so dim and dirty,  
 I have dragg'd to three-and-thirty.  
 What have these years left to me ?  
 Nothing—except thirty-three.

## EPIGRAMS

So Castlereagh has cut his throat !—The worst  
 Of this is,—that his own was not the first.

---

So *He* has cut his throat at last !—He ! Who ?  
 The man who cut his country's long ago.

## JOHN KEATS

Who kill'd John Keats ?  
 " I," says the Quarterly,  
 So savage and Tartarly ;  
 " 'Twas one of my feats."

Who shot the arrow ?  
 " The poet-priest Milman  
 (So ready to kill man),  
 Or Southey, or Barrow."

July, 1821.



## TO MR. MURRAY

FOR Orford and for Waldegrave  
 You give much more than me you gave ;  
 Which is not fairly to behave,  
                     My Murray.

Because if a live dog, 'tis said,  
 Be worth a lion fairly sped,  
 A *live lord* must be worth *two* dead,  
                     My Murray.

And if, as the opinion goes,  
 Verse hath a better sale than prose,—  
 Certes, I should have more than those,  
                     My Murray.

10

But now this sheet is nearly cramm'd,  
 So, if *you will*, I shan't be shamm'd,  
 And if *you won't*, *you* may be damn'd,  
                     My Murray.

## THE IRISH AVATAR

“ And Ireland, like a bastinadoed elephant, kneeling to  
 receive the paltry rider.”—CURRAN.

ERE the daughter of Brunswick is cold in her grave,  
 And her ashes still float to their home o'er the tide,  
 Lo ! George the triumphant speeds over the wave,  
 To the long-cherish'd isle which he loved like his—  
       bride !

True, the great of her bright and brief era are gone,  
 The rainbow-like epoch where Freedom could pause  
 For the few little years, out of centuries won,  
 Which betray'd not, or crush'd not, or wept not her  
       cause.

True, the chains of the Catholic clank o'er his rags,  
 The castle still stands, and the senate's no more, 10  
 And the famine which dwelt on her freedomless crags  
 Is extending its steps to her desolate shore.

To her desolate shore—where the emigrant stands  
 For a moment to gaze ere he flies from his hearth;  
 Tears fall on his chain, though it drops from his hands,  
 For the dungeon he quits is the place of his birth.

But he comes! the Messiah of royalty comes!  
 Like a goodly Leviathan roll'd from the waves;  
 Then receive him as best such an advent becomes,  
 With a legion of cooks, and an army of slaves! 20

He comes in the promise and bloom of threescore,  
 To perform in the pageant the sovereign's part—  
 But long live the shamrock, which shadows him o'er!  
 Could the green in his *hat* be transferr'd to his *heart*!

Could that long-wither'd spot but be verdant again,  
 And a new spring of noble affections arise—  
 Then might freedom forgive thee this dance in thy  
 chain,  
 And this shout of thy slavery which saddens the skies.

Is it madness or meanness which clings to thee now?  
 Were he God—as he is but the commonest clay, 30  
 With scarce fewer wrinkles than sins on his brow—  
 Such servile devotion might shame him away.

Ay, roar in his train! let thine orators lash  
 Their fanciful spirits to pamper his pride—  
 Not thus did thy Grattan indignantly flash  
 His soul o'er the freedom implored and denied.

Ever glorious Grattan! the best of the good!  
 So simple in heart, so sublime in the rest!  
 With all which Demosthenes wanted endued,  
 And his rival or victor in all he possess'd. 40

Ere Tully arose in the zenith of Rome,  
 Though unequall'd, preceded, the task was begun —  
 But Grattan sprung up like a god from the tomb  
 Of ages, the first, last, the saviour, the *one*!

With the skill of an Orpheus to soften the brute;  
 With the fire of Prometheus to kindle mankind;  
 Even Tyranny listening sate melted or mute,  
 And Corruption shrunk scorch'd from the glance of  
 his mind.

But back to our theme! Back to despots and slaves!  
 Feasts furnish'd by Famine! rejoicings by Pain! 50  
 True freedom but *welcomes*, while slavery still *raves*,  
 When a week's saturnalia hath loosen'd her chain.

Let the poor squalid splendour thy wreck can afford  
 (As the bankrupt's profusion his ruin would hide),  
 Gild over the palace, Lo! Erin, thy lord!  
 Kiss his foot with thy blessing, his blessings denied!

Or if freedom past hope be extorted at last,  
 If the idol of brass find his feet are of clay,  
 Must what terror or policy wring forth be class'd  
 With what monarchs ne'er give, but as wolves yield 60  
 their prey?

Each brute hath its nature; a king's is to *reign*,—  
 To *reign*! in that word see, ye ages, comprised  
 The cause of the curses all annals contain,  
 From Cæsar the dreaded to George the despised!

Wear, Fingal, thy trapping! O'Connell, proclaim  
 His accomplishments! *His!!!* and thy country  
 convince  
 Half an age's contempt was an error of fame,  
 And that "Hal is the rascaliest, sweetest *young*  
 prince!"



Will thy yard of blue riband, poor Fingal, recall  
 The fetters from millions of Catholic limbs ? 70  
 Or, has it not bound thee the fastest of all  
 The slaves, who now hail their betrayer with hymns ?

Ay ! “ Build him a dwelling ! ” let each give his mite !  
 Till, like Babel, the new royal dome hath arisen !  
 Let thy beggars and helots their pittance unite—  
 And a palace bestow for a poor-house and prison !

Spread—spread, for Vitellius, the royal repast,  
 Till the gluttonous despot be stuff’d to the gorge !  
 And the roar of his drunkards proclaim him at last  
 The fourth of the fools and oppressors call’d  
 “ George ! ” 80

Let the tables be loaded with feasts till they groan !  
 Till they *groan* like thy people, through ages of woe !  
 Let the wine flow around the old Bacchanal’s throne,  
 Like their blood which has flow’d, and which yet has  
 to flow.

But let not *his* name be thine idol alone—  
 On his right hand behold a Sejanus appears !  
 Thine own Castlereagh ! let him still be thine own !  
 A wretch never named but with curses and jeers !

Till now, when the isle which should blush for his birth,  
 Deep, deep as the gore which he shed on her soil, 90  
 Seems proud of the reptile which crawl’d from her earth,  
 And for murder repays him with shouts and a smile.

Without one single ray of her genius, without  
 The fancy, the manhood, the fire of her race—  
 The miscreant who well might plunge Erin in doubt  
 If *she* ever gave birth to a being so base.

If she did—let her long-boasted proverb be hush’d,  
 Which proclaims that from Erin no reptile can  
 spring—

See the cold-blooded serpent, with venom full flush’d,  
 Still warming its folds in the breast of a king ! 100

Shout, drink, feast, and flatter ! Oh ! Erin, how low  
Wert thou sunk by misfortune and tyranny, till  
Thy welcome of tyrants hath plunged thee below  
The depth of thy deep in a deeper gulf still !

My voice, though but humble, was raised for thy right,  
My vote, as a freeman's, still voted thee free,  
This hand, though but feeble, would arm in thy fight,  
And this heart, though outworn, had a throb still  
for thee !

Yes, I loved thee and thine, though thou art not my  
land,  
I have known noble hearts and great souls in thy sons,  
And I wept with the world, o'er the patriot band 111  
Who are gone, but I weep them no longer as once.

For happy are they now reposing afar,—  
Thy Grattan, thy Curran, thy Sheridan, all  
Who, for years, were the chiefs in the eloquent war,  
And redeem'd, if they have not retarded, thy fall.

Yes, happy are they in their cold English graves !  
Their shades cannot start to thy shouts of to-day—  
Nor the steps of enslavers and chain-kissing slaves  
Be stamp'd in the turf o'er their fetterless clay. 120

Till now I had envied thy sons and their shore,  
Though their virtues were hunted, their liberties fled ;  
There was something so warm and sublime in the core  
Of an Irishman's heart, that I envy—thy dead.

Or, if aught in my bosom can quench for an hour  
My contempt for a nation so servile, though sore,  
Which though trod like the worm will not turn upon  
power,  
'Tis the glory of Grattan, and genius of Moore !  
September, 1821.



## STANZAS WRITTEN ON THE ROAD BETWEEN FLORENCE AND PISA

Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story ;  
The days of our youth are the days of our glory ;  
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty  
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the brow that is  
wrinkled ?

'Tis but as a dead-flower with May-dew besprinkled.  
Then away with all such from the head that is hoary !  
What care I for the wreaths that can *only* give glory !

Oh FAME !—if I e'er took delight in thy praises, 9  
'Twas less for the sake of thy high-sounding phrases,  
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover,  
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

*There* chiefly I sought thee, *there* only I found thee ;  
Her glance was the best of the rays that surround thee ;  
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my  
story,

I knew it was love, and I felt it was glory.

*November, 1821.*

## ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR

MISSOLONGHI, Jan. 22, 1824.

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,  
Since others it hath ceased to move :  
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,  
Still let me love !

My days are in the yellow leaf ;  
The flowers and fruits of love are gone ;  
The worm, the canker, and the grief  
Are mine alone !



The fire that on my bosom preys,  
Is lone as some volcanic isle;  
No torch is kindled at its blaze—  
A funeral pile. 10

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,  
The exalted portion of the pain  
And power of love, I cannot share,  
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus*—and 'tis not *here*—  
Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor *now*,  
Where glory decks the hero's bier,  
Or binds his brow. 20

The sword, the banner, and the field,  
Glory and Greece, around me see!  
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,  
Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece—she *is* awake!)  
Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*  
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,  
And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,  
Unworthy manhood!—unto thee  
Indifferent should the smile or frown  
Of beauty be. 30

If thou regrett'st thy youth, *why* live?  
The land of honourable death  
Is here:—up to the field, and give  
Away thy breath!

Seek out—less often sought than found—  
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;  
Then look around, and choose thy ground,  
And take thy rest. 40

*Phoebe*

# ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH REVIEWERS

STILL must I hear ?—shall hoarse Fitzgerald bawl  
His creaking couplets in a tavern hall,  
And I not sing, lest, haply, Scotch reviews  
Should dub me scribbler, and denounce my muse ?  
Prepare for rhyme—I'll publish, right or wrong :  
Fools are my theme, let satire be my song.

Oh ! nature's noblest gift—my grey goose-quill !  
Slave of my thoughts, obedient to my will,  
Torn from thy parent bird to form a pen,  
That mighty instrument of little men !  
The pen ! foredoom'd to aid the mental throes  
Of brains that labour, big with verse or prose,  
Though nymphs forsake, and critics may deride,  
The lover's solace, and the author's pride.  
What wits, what poets dost thou daily raise !  
How frequent is thy use, how small thy praise !  
Condemn'd at length to be forgotten quite,  
With all the pages which 'twas thine to write.  
But thou, at least, mine own especial pen !  
Once laid aside, but now assumed again,  
Our task complete, like Hamet's shall be free ;  
Though spurn'd by others, yet beloved by me :  
Then let us soar to-day ; no common theme,  
No eastern vision, no distemper'd dream  
Inspires—our path, though full of thorns, is plain ;  
Smooth be the verse, and easy be the strain.

When Vice triumphant holds her sov'reign sway,  
Obey'd by all who nought beside obey ;

When Folly, frequent harbinger of crime,  
 Bedecks her cap with bells of every clime ;  
 When knaves and fools combined o'er all prevail,  
 And weigh their justice in a golden scale ;  
 E'en then the boldest start from public sneers,  
 Afraid of shame, unknown to other fears,  
 More darkly sin, by satire kept in awe,  
 And shrink from ridicule, though not from law.

30

Such is the force of wit ! but not belong  
 To me the arrows of satiric song ;  
 The royal vices of our age demand  
 A keener weapon, and a mightier hand.  
 Still there are follies, e'en for me to chase,  
 And yield at least amusement in the race :  
 Laugh when I laugh, I seek no other fame ;  
 Thy cry is up, and scribblers are my game.  
 Speed, Pegasus !—ye strains of great and small,  
 Ode, epic, elegy, have at you all !  
 I too can scrawl, and once upon a time  
 I pour'd along the town a flood of rhyme,  
 A schoolboy freak, unworthy praise or blame ;  
 I printed—older children do the same.  
 'Tis pleasant, sure, to see one's name in print ;  
 A book's a book, although there's nothing in 't.  
 Not that a title's sounding charm can save  
 Or scrawl or scribbler from an equal grave :  
 This Lambe must own, since his patrician name  
 Fail'd to preserve the spurious farce from shame.  
 No matter, George continues still to write,  
 Though now the name is veil'd from public sight.  
 Moved by the great example, I pursue  
 The self-same road, but make my own review :  
 Not seek great Jeffrey's, yet, like him, will be  
 Self-constituted judge of poesy.

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60

A man must serve his time to every trade  
 Save censure—critics all are ready made.  
 Take hackney'd jokes from Miller, got by rote,  
 With just enough of learning to misquote ;



A mind well skill'd to find or forge a fault ;  
 A turn for punning, call it Attic salt ;  
 To Jeffrey go, be silent and discreet,  
 His pay is just ten sterling pounds per sheet : 70  
 Fear not to lie, 'twill seem a sharper hit ;  
 Shrink not from blasphemy, 'twill pass for wit ;  
 Care not for feeling—pass your proper jest,  
 And stand a critic, hated yet caress'd.

And shall we own such judgment ? no—as soon  
 Seek roses in December—ice in June ;  
 Hope constancy in wind, or corn in chaff ;  
 Believe a woman or an epitaph,  
 Or any other thing that 's false, before  
 You trust in critics, who themselves are sore ; 80  
 Or yield one single thought to be misled  
 By Jeffrey's heart, or Lambe's Bœotian head.  
 To these young tyrants, by themselves misplaced,  
 Combined usurpers on the throne of taste ;  
 To these, when authors bend in humble awe,  
 And hail their voice as truth, their word as law—  
 While these are censors, 'twould be sin to spare ;  
 While such are critics, why should I forbear ?  
 But yet, so near all modern worthies run,  
 'Tis doubtful whom to seek, or whom to shun ; 90  
 Nor know we when to spare, or where to strike,  
 Our bards and censors are so much alike.

Then should you ask me, why I venture o'er  
 The path which Pope and Gifford trod before ;  
 If not yet sicken'd, you can still proceed :  
 Go on ; my rhyme will tell you as you read.  
 “ But hold ! ” exclaims a friend, “ here 's some neglect :  
 This—that—and t'other line seem incorrect.”  
 What then ? the self-same blunder Pope has got,  
 And careless Dryden—“ Ay, but Pye has not : ”—  
 Indeed !—'tis granted, faith !—but what care I ? 101  
 Better to err with Pope, than shine with Pye.

Time was, ere yet in these degenerate days  
 Ignoble themes obtain'd mistaken praise,

When sense and wit with poesy allied,  
 No fabled graces, flourish'd side by side ;  
 From the same fount their inspiration drew,  
 And, rear'd by taste, bloom'd fairer as they grew.  
 Then, in this happy isle, a Pope's pure strain  
 Sought the rapt soul to charm, nor sought in vain ;  
 A polish'd nation's praise aspired to claim, 111  
 And raised the people's, as the poet's fame.  
 Like him great Dryden pour'd the tide of song,  
 In stream less smooth, indeed, yet doubly strong.  
 Then Congreve's scenes could cheer, or Otway's  
 melt—

For nature then an English audience felt.  
 But why these names, or greater still, retrace,  
 When all to feebler bards resign their place ?  
 Yet to such times our lingering looks are cast,  
 When taste and reason with those times are past. 120  
 Now look around, and turn each trifling page,  
 Survey the precious works that please the age ;  
 This truth at least let satire's self allow,  
 No dearth of bards can be complain'd of now.  
 The loaded press beneath her labour groans,  
 And printers' devils shake their weary bones ;  
 While Southey's epics cram the creaking shelves,  
 And Little's lyrics shine in hot-press'd twelves.  
 Thus saith the Preacher : "Nought beneath the  
 sun

Is new ; " yet still from change to change we run : 130  
 What varied wonders tempt us as they pass !  
 The cow-pox, tractors, galvanism, and gas,  
 In turns appear, to make the vulgar stare,  
 Till the swoln bubble bursts—and all is air !  
 Nor less new schools of Poetry arise,  
 Where dull pretenders grapple for the prize :  
 O'er taste awhile these pseudo-bards prevail ;  
 Each country book-club bows the knee to Baal,  
 And, hurling lawful genius from the throne,  
 Erects a shrine and idol of its own ; 140  
 Some leaden calf—but whom it matters not,  
 From soaring Southey down to grovelling Stott.



Behold ! in various throngs the scribbling crew,  
 For notice eager, pass in long review :  
 Each spurs his jaded Pegasus apace,  
 And rhyme and blank maintain an equal race ;  
 Sonnets on sonnets crowd, and ode on ode ;  
 And tales of terror jostle on the road ;  
 Immeasurable measures move along ;  
 For simpering folly loves a varied song, 150  
 To strange mysterious dulness still the friend,  
 Admires the strain she cannot comprehend.  
 Thus Lays of Minstrels—may they be the last !—  
 On half-strung harps whine mournful to the blast.  
 While mountain spirits prate to river sprites,  
 That dames may listen to the sound at nights ;  
 And goblin brats, of Gilpin Horner's brood,  
 Decoy young border-nobles through the wood,  
 And skip at every step, Lord knows how high,  
 And frighten foolish babes, the Lord knows why ; 160  
 While high-born ladies in their magic cell,  
 Forbidding knights to read who cannot spell,  
 Despatch a courier to a wizard's grave,  
 And fight with honest men to shield a knave.

Next view in state, proud prancing on his roan,  
 The golden-crested haughty Marmion,  
 Now forging scrolls, now foremost in the fight,  
 Not quite a felon, yet but half a knight,  
 The gibbet or the field prepared to grace ;  
 A mighty mixture of the great and base. 170  
 And think'st thou, Scott ! by vain conceit perchance,  
 On public taste to foist thy stale romance,  
 Though Murray with his Miller may combine  
 To yield thy muse just half-a-crown per line ?  
 No ! when the sons of song descend to trade,  
 Their bays are sear, their former laurels fade.  
 Let such forego the poet's sacred name,  
 Who rack their brains for lucre, not for fame :  
 Still for stern Mammon may they toil in vain !  
 And sadly gaze on gold they cannot gain ! 180  
 Such be their meed, such still the just reward



Of prostituted muse and hireling bard !  
For this we spurn Apollo's venal son,  
And bid a long "good night to Marmion."

These are the themes that claim our plaudits now ;  
These are the bards to whom the muse must bow ;  
While Milton, Dryden, Pope, alike forgot,  
Resign their hallow'd bays to Walter Scott.

The time has been, when yet the muse was young,  
When Homer swept the lyre, and Maro sung, 190  
An epic scarce ten centuries could claim,  
While awe-struck nations hail'd the magic name :  
The work of each immortal bard appears  
The single wonder of a thousand years.  
Empires have moulder'd from the face of earth,  
Tongues have expired with those who gave them birth,  
Without the glory such a strain can give,  
As even in ruin bids the language live.  
Not so with us, though minor bards, content  
On one great work a life of labour spent : 200  
With eagle pinion soaring to the skies,  
Behold the ballad-monger Southey rise !  
To him let Camoëns, Milton, Tasso yield,  
Whose annual strains, like armies, take the field.  
First in the ranks see Joan of Arc advance,  
The scourge of England and the boast of France !  
Though burnt by wicked Bedford for a witch,  
Behold her statue placed in glory's niche ;  
Her fetters burst, and just released from prison,  
A virgin phoenix from her ashes risen. 210  
Next see tremendous Thalaba come on,  
Arabia's monstrous, wild, and wondrous son ;  
Domdaniel's dread destroyer, who o'erthrew  
More mad magicians than the world e'er knew.  
Immortal hero ! all thy foes o'ercome,  
For ever reign—the rival of Tom Thumb !  
Since startled metre fled before thy face,  
Well wert thou doom'd the last of all thy race !  
Well might triumphant genii bear thee hence,  
Illustrious conqueror of common sense ! 220

Now, last and greatest, Madoc spreads his sails,  
 Cacique in Mexico, and prince in Wales ;  
 Tells us strange tales, as other travellers do,  
 More old than Mandeville's, and not so true.  
 Oh ! Southey ! Southey ! cease thy varied song !  
 A bard may chant too often and too long :  
 As thou art strong in verse, in mercy, spare !  
 A fourth, alas ! were more than we could bear.  
 But if, in spite of all the world can say,  
 Thou still wilt verseward plod thy weary way ; 230  
 If still in Berkley ballads most uncivil,  
 Thou wilt devote old women to the devil,  
 The babe unborn thy dread intent may rue :  
 " God help thee," Southey, and thy readers too.

Next comes the dull disciple of thy school,  
 That mild apostate from poetic rule,  
 The simple Wordsworth, framer of a lay  
 As soft as evening in his favourite May,  
 Who warns his friend " to shake off toil and trouble,  
 And quit his books, for fear of growing double ; " 240  
 Who, both by precept and example, shows  
 That prose is verse, and verse is merely prose ;  
 Convincing all, by demonstration plain,  
 Poetic souls delight in prose insane ;  
 And Christmas stories tortured into rhyme  
 Contain the essence of the true sublime.  
 Thus, when he tells the tale of Betty Foy,  
 The idiot mother of " an idiot boy ; "  
 A moon-struck, silly lad, who lost his way,  
 And, like his bard, confounded night with day ; 250  
 So close on each pathetic part he dwells,  
 And each adventure so sublimely tells,  
 That all who view the " idiot in his glory "  
 Conceive the bard the hero of the story.

Shall gentle Coleridge pass unnoticed here,  
 To turgid ode and tumid stanza dear ?  
 Though themes of innocence amuse him best,  
 Yet still obscurity 's a welcome guest.



If Inspiration should her aid refuse  
 To him who takes a pixy for a muse, 260  
 Yet none in lofty numbers can surpass  
 The bard who soars to elegize an ass.  
 So well the subject suits his noble mind,  
 He brays, the laureate of the long-ear'd kind.

Oh ! wonder-working Lewis ! monk, or bard,  
 Who fain wouldst make Parnassus a churchyard !  
 Lo ! wreaths of yew, not laurel, bind thy brow,  
 Thy muse a sprite, Apollo's sexton thou !  
 Whether on ancient tombs thou tak'st thy stand,  
 By gibb'ring spectres hail'd, thy kindred band ; 270  
 Or tracest chaste descriptions on thy page,  
 To please the females of our modest age ;  
 All hail, M.P. ! from whose infernal brain  
 Thin-sheeted phantoms glide, a grisly train ;  
 At whose command "grim women" throng in crowds,  
 And kings of fire, of water, and of clouds,  
 With "small gray men," "wild yagers," and what not,  
 To crown with honour thee and Walter Scott ;  
 Again all hail ! if tales like thine may please, 280  
 St. Luke alone can vanquish the disease ;  
 Even Satan's self with thee might dread to dwell,  
 And in thy skull discern a deeper hell.

Who in soft guise, surrounded by a choir  
 Of virgins melting, not to Vesta's fire,  
 With sparkling eyes, and cheek by passion flush'd,  
 Strikes his wild lyre, whilst listening dames are hush'd ?  
 'Tis Little ! young Catullus of his day,  
 As sweet, but as immoral, in his lay !  
 Grieved to condemn, the muse must still be just, 290  
 Nor spare melodious advocates of lust.  
 Pure is the flame which o'er her altar burns ;  
 From grosser incense with disgust she turns :  
 Yet kind to youth, this expiation o'er,  
 She bids thee "mend thy line and sin no more."

For thee, translator of the tinsel song,  
 To whom such glittering ornaments belong.



Hibernian Strangford ! with thine eyes of blue,  
 And boasted locks of red or auburn hue,  
 Whose plaintive strain each love-sick miss admires,  
 And o'er harmonious fustian half expires, 300  
 Learn, if thou canst, to yield thine author's sense,  
 Nor vend thy sonnets on a false pretence.  
 Think'st thou to gain thy verse a higher place,  
 By dressing Camoëns in a suit of lace ?  
 Mend, Strangford ! mend thy morals and thy taste ;  
 Be warm, but pure ; be amorous, but be chaste ;  
 Cease to deceive ; thy pilfer'd harp restore,  
 Nor teach the Lusian bard to copy Moore.

Behold !—ye tarts !—one moment spare the text—  
 Hayley's last work, and worst—until his next ; 310  
 Whether he spin poor couplets into plays,  
 Or damn the dead with purgatorial praise,  
 His style in youth or age is still the same,  
 For ever feeble and for ever tame.  
 Triumphant first see "Temper's Triumphs" shine !  
 At least I'm sure they triumph'd over mine.  
 Of "Music's Triumphs," all who read may swear  
 That luckless music never triumph'd there.

Moravians, rise ! bestow some meet reward  
 On dull devotion—Lo ! the Sabbath bard, 320  
 Sepulchral Grahame, pours his notes sublime  
 In mangled prose, nor e'en aspires to rhyme ;  
 Breaks into blank the Gospel of St. Luke,  
 And boldly pilfers from the Pentateuch ;  
 And, undisturb'd by conscientious qualms,  
 Perverts the Prophets, and purloins the Psalms.

Hail, Sympathy ! thy soft idea brings  
 A thousand visions of a thousand things,  
 And shows, still whimpering through threescore of  
 years,  
 The maudlin prince of mournful sonneteers. 330  
 And art thou not their prince, harmonious Bowles !  
 Thou first, great oracle of tender souls ?

Whether thou sing'st with equal ease, and grief,  
The fall of empires, or a yellow leaf ;  
Whether thy muse most lamentably tells  
What merry sounds proceed from Oxford bells,  
Or, still in bells delighting, finds a friend  
In every chime that jingled from Ostend ;  
Ah ! how much juster were thy muse's hap,  
If to thy bells thou wouldst but add a cap ! 340  
Delightful Bowles ! still blessing and still blest,  
All love thy strain, but children like it best.  
'Tis thine, with gentle Little's moral song,  
To soothe the mania of the amorous throng !  
With thee our nursery damsels shed their tears,  
Ere miss as yet completes her infant years :  
But in her teens thy whining powers are vain ;  
She quits poor Bowles for Little's purer strain.  
Now to soft themes thou scornest to confine 350  
The lofty numbers of a harp like thine ;  
"Awake a louder and a loftier strain,"  
Such as none heard before, or will again !  
Where all discoveries jumbled from the flood,  
Since first the leaky ark reposed in mud,  
By more or less, are sung in every book,  
From Captain Noah down to Captain Cook.  
Nor this alone ; but, pausing on the road,  
The bard sighs forth a gentle episode ;  
And gravely tells—attend, each beauteous miss !— 360  
When first Madeira trembled to a kiss.  
Bowles ! in thy memory let this precept dwell,  
Stick to thy sonnets, man !—at least they sell.  
But if some new-born whim, or larger bribe,  
Prompt thy crude brain, and claim thee for a scribe ;  
If chance some bard, though once by dunces fear'd,  
Now, prone in dust, can only be revered ;  
If Pope, whose fame and genius, from the first,  
Have foil'd the best of critics, needs the worst,  
Do thou essay : each fault, each failing scan ; 370  
The first of poets was, alas ! but man.  
Rake from each ancient dunghill every pearl,  
Consult Lord Fanny, and confide in Curll :



Let all the scandals of a former age  
 Perch on thy pen, and flutter o'er thy page ;  
 Affect a candour which thou canst not feel,  
 Clothe envy in the garb of honest zeal ;  
 Write, as if St. John's soul could still inspire,  
 And do from hate what Mallet did for hire.  
 Oh ! hadst thou lived in that congenial time,  
 To rave with Dennis, and with Ralph to rhyme ;      380  
 Throng'd with the rest around his living head,  
 Not raised thy hoof against the lion dead ;  
 A meet reward had crown'd thy glorious gains,  
 And link'd thee to the Dunciad for thy pains.

Another epic ! Who inflicts again  
 More books of blank upon the sons of men ?  
 Boeotian Cottle, rich Bristowa's boast,  
 Imports old stories from the Cambrian coast,  
 And sends his goods to market—all alive !  
 Lines forty thousand, cantos twenty-five !      390  
 Fresh fish from Helicon ! who'll buy, who'll buy ?  
 The precious bargain 's cheap—in faith, not I.  
 Your turtle-feeder's verse must needs be flat,  
 Though Bristol bloat him with the verdant fat ;  
 If Commerce fills the purse, she clogs the brain,  
 And Amos Cottle strikes the lyre in vain.  
 In him an author's luckless lot behold,  
 Condemn'd to make the books which once he sold.  
 Oh, Amos Cottle !—Phoebus ! what a name  
 To fill the speaking trump of future fame !—      400  
 Oh, Amos Cottle ! for a moment think  
 What meagre profits spring from pen and ink !  
 When thus devoted to poetic dreams,  
 Who will peruse thy prostituted reams ?  
 Oh ! pen perverted ! paper misapplied !  
 Had Cottle still adorn'd the counter's side,  
 Bent o'er the desk, or, born to useful toils,  
 Been taught to make the paper which he soils,  
 Plough'd, delved, or plied the oar with lusty limb,  
 He had not sung of Wales, nor I of him.      410



As Sisyphus against the infernal steep  
Rolls the huge rock whose motions ne'er may sleep,  
So up thy hill, ambrosial Richmond, heaves  
Dull Maurice all his granite weight of leaves :  
Smooth, solid monuments of mental pain !  
The petrifications of a plodding brain,  
That, ere they reach the top, fall lumbering back again.

With broken lyre, and cheek serenely pale,  
Lo ! sad Alcaeus wanders down the vale ;  
Though fair they rose, and might have bloom'd at last,  
His hopes have perish'd by the northern blast : 421  
Nipp'd in the bud by Caledonian gales,  
His blossoms wither as the blast prevails !  
O'er his lost works let *classic* Sheffield weep ;  
May no rude hand disturb their early sleep !

Yet say ! why should the bard at once resign  
His claim to favour from the sacred Nine ?  
For ever startled by the mingled howl  
Of northern wolves, that still in darkness prowl ;  
A coward brood, which mangle as they prey, 430  
By hellish instinct, all that cross their way ;  
Aged or young, the living or the dead,  
No mercy find—these harpies must be fed.  
Why do the injured unresisting yield  
The calm possession of their native field ?  
Why tamely thus before their fangs retreat,  
Nor hunt the blood-hounds back to Arthur's Seat ?

Health to immortal Jeffrey ! once, in name,  
England could boast a judge almost the same ;  
In soul so like, so merciful, yet just, 440  
Some think that Satan has resign'd his trust,  
And given the spirit to the world again,  
To sentence letters, as he sentenced men.  
With hand less mighty, but with heart as black,  
With voice as willing to decree the rack ;  
Bred in the courts betimes, though all that law  
As yet hath taught him is to find a flaw ;  
Since well instructed in the patriot school  
To rail at party, though a party tool,

Who knows, if chance his patrons should restore 450  
 Back to the sway they forfeited before,  
 His scribbling toils some recompense may meet,  
 And raise this Daniel to the judgment-seat ?  
 Let Jeffrey's shade indulge the pious hope,  
 And greeting thus, present him with a rope :  
 " Heir to my virtues ! man of equal mind !  
 Skill'd to condemn as to traduce mankind,  
 This cord receive, for thee reserved with care,  
 To wield in judgment, and at length to wear."

Health to great Jeffrey ! Heaven preserve his life,  
 To flourish on the fertile shores of Fife, 461  
 And guard it sacred in its future wars,  
 Since authors sometimes seek the field of Mars !  
 Can none remember that eventful day,  
 That ever-glorious, almost fatal fray,  
 When Little's leadless pistol met his eye,  
 And Bow-street myrmidons stood laughing by ?  
 Oh, day disastrous ! on her firm-set rock,  
 Dunedin's castle felt a secret shock ;  
 Dark roll'd the sympathetic waves of Forth, 470  
 Low groan'd the startled whirlwinds of the north ;  
 Tweed ruffled half his waves to form a tear,  
 The other half pursued its calm career ;  
 Arthur's steep summit nodded to its base,  
 The surly Tolbooth scarcely kept her place.  
 The Tolbooth felt—for marble sometimes can,  
 On such occasions, feel as much as man—  
 The Tolbooth felt defrauded of his charms,  
 If Jeffrey died, except within her arms :  
 Nay last, not least, on that portentous morn, 480  
 The sixteenth story, where himself was born,  
 His patrimonial garret, fell to ground,  
 And pale Edina shudder'd at the sound :  
 Strew'd were the streets around with milk-white  
 reams,  
 Flow'd all the Canongate with inky streams ;  
 This of his candour seem'd the sable dew,  
 That of his valour show'd the bloodless hue ;



And all with justice deem'd the two combined  
 The mingled emblems of his mighty mind.  
 But Caledonia's goddess hover'd o'er 490  
 The field, and saved him from the wrath of Moore ;  
 From either pistol snatch'd the vengeful lead,  
 And straight restored it to her favourite's head ;  
 That head, with greater than magnetic power,  
 Caught it, as Danaë caught the golden shower,  
 And, though the thickening dross will scarce refine,  
 Augments its ore, and is itself a mine.  
 " My son," she cried, " ne'er thirst for gore again,  
 Resign the pistol and resume the pen ;  
 O'er politics and poesy preside, 500  
 Boast of thy country, and Britannia's guide !  
 For long as Albion's heedless sons submit,  
 Or Scottish taste decides on English wit,  
 So long shall last thine unmolested reign,  
 Nor any dare to take thy name in vain.  
 Behold, a chosen band shall aid thy plan,  
 And own thee chieftain of the critic clan.  
 First in the oat-fed phalanx shall be seen  
 The travell'd thane, Athenian Aberdeen.  
 Herbert shall wield Thor's hammer, and sometimes,  
 In gratitude, thou'lt praise his rugged rhymes. 511  
 Smug Sydney too thy bitter page shall seek,  
 And classic Hallam, much renown'd for Greek ;  
 Scott may perchance his name and influence lend,  
 And paltry Pillans shall traduce his friend ;  
 While gay Thalia's luckless votary, Lambe,  
 Damn'd like the devil, devil-like will damn.  
 Known be thy name, unbounded be thy sway !  
 Thy Holland's banquets shall each toil repay ;  
 While grateful Britain yields the praise she owes 520  
 To Holland's hirelings and to learning's foes.  
 Yet mark one caution ere thy next Review  
 Spread its light wings of saffron and of blue,  
 Beware lest blundering Brougham destroy the sale,  
 Turn beef to bannocks, cauliflowers to kail."  
 Thus having said, the kilted goddess kiss'd  
 Her son, and vanish'd in a Scottish mist.



Then prosper, Jeffrey ! pertest of the train  
Whom Scotland pampers with her fiery grain !  
Whatever blessing waits a genuine Scot,  
In double portion swells thy glorious lot ;  
For thee Edina culls her evening sweets,  
And showers their odours on thy candid sheets,  
Whose hue and fragrance to thy work adhere—  
This scents its pages, and that gilds its rear.  
Lo ! blushing Itch, coy nymph, enamour'd grown,  
Forsakes the rest, and cleaves to thee alone ;  
And, too unjust to other Pictish men,  
Enjoys thy person, and inspires thy pen !

530

Illustrious Holland ! hard would be his lot,  
His hirelings mention'd, and himself forgot !  
Holland, with Henry Petty at his back,  
The whipper-in and huntsman of the pack.  
Blest be the banquets spread at Holland House,  
Where Scotchmen feed, and critics may carouse !  
Long, long beneath that hospitable roof  
Shall Grub-street dine, while duns are kept aloof.  
See honest Hallam lay aside his fork,  
Resume his pen, review his Lordship's work,  
And, grateful for the dainties on his plate,  
Declare his landlord can at least translate !  
Dunedin ! view thy children with delight,  
They write for food—and feed because they write :  
And lest, when heated with the unusual grape,  
Some glowing thoughts should to the press escape,  
And tinge with red the female reader's cheek,  
My lady skims the cream of each critique ;  
Breathes o'er the page her purity of soul,  
Reforms each error, and refines the whole.

540

550

Now to the Drama turn—Oh ! motley sight !  
What precious scenes the wondering eyes invite !  
Puns, and a prince within a barrel pent,  
And Dibdin's nonsense yield complete content.  
Though now, thank Heaven ! the Rosciomania's o'er,  
And full-grown actors are endured once more ;

560

Yet what avail their vain attempts to please,  
While British critics suffer scenes like these ;  
While Reynolds vents his “ dammes ! ” “ poohs ! ” and  
“ zounds ! ”

And common-place and common sense confounds ?  
While Kenney's “ World ”—ah ! where is Kenney's  
wit ?—

570

Tires the sad gallery, lulls the listless pit ;  
And Beaumont's pilfer'd Caratach affords  
A tragedy complete in all but words ?

Who but must mourn, while these are all the rage,  
The degradation of our vaunted stage ?

Heavens ! is all sense of shame and talent gone ?

Have we no living bard of merit ?—none !

Awake, George Colman ! Cumberland, awake !

Ring the alarum bell ! let folly quake !

Oh, Sheridan ! if aught can move thy pen,

580

Let Comedy assume her throne again ;

Abjure the mummary of the German schools ;

Leave new Pizarros to translating fools ;

Give, as thy last memorial to the age,

One classic drama, and reform the stage.

Gods ! o'er those boards shall Folly rear her head,

Where Garrick trod, and Siddons lives to tread ?

On those shall Farce display Buffoon'ry's mask,

And Hook conceal his heroes in a cask ?

Shall sapient managers new scenes produce

590

From Cherry, Skeffington, and Mother Goose ?

While Shakspeare, Otway, Massinger, forgot,

On stalls must moulder, or in closets rot ?

Lo ! with what pomp the daily prints proclaim

The rival candidates for Attic fame !

In grim array though Lewis' spectres rise,

Still Skeffington and Goose divide the prize.

And sure *great* Skeffington must claim our praise,

For skirtless coats and skeletons of plays

Renown'd alike ; whose genius ne'er confines

600

Her flight to garnish Greenwood's gay designs ;

Nor sleeps with “ Sleeping Beauties,” but anon

In five facetious acts comes thundering on,



While poor John Bull, bewilder'd with the scene,  
 Stares, wondering what the devil it can mean ;  
 But as some hands applaud, a venal few !  
 Rather than sleep, why John applauds it too.

Such are we now. Ah ! wherefore should we turn  
 To what our fathers were, unless to mourn ?  
 Degenerate Britons ! are ye dead to shame, 610  
 Or, kind to dulness, do you fear to blame ?  
 Well may the nobles of our present race  
 Watch each distortion of a Naldi's face ;  
 Well may they smile on Italy's buffoons,  
 And worship Catalani's pantaloons,  
 Since their own drama yields no fairer trace  
 Of wit than puns, of humour than grimace.

Then let Ausonia, skill'd in every art  
 To soften manners, but corrupt the heart,  
 Pour her exotic follies o'er the town, 620  
 To sanction Vice, and hunt Decorum down :  
 Let wedded strumpets languish o'er Deshayes,  
 And bless the promise which his form displays ;  
 While Gayton bounds before th' enraptured looks  
 Of hoary marquises and stripling dukes :  
 Let high-born lechers eye the lively Presle  
 Twirl her light limbs, that spurn the needless veil ;  
 Let Angiolini bare her breast of snow,  
 Wave the white arm, and point the pliant toe ;  
 Collini trill her love-inspiring song, 630  
 Strain her fair neck, and charm the listening throng !  
 Whet not your scythe, suppressors of our vice !  
 Reforming saints ! too delicately nice !  
 By whose decrees, our sinful souls to save,  
 No Sunday tankards foam, no barbers shave ;  
 And beer undrawn, and beards unmown, display  
 Your holy reverence for the Sabbath-day.

Or hail at once the patron and the pile  
 Of vice and folly, Greville and Argyle !  
 Where yon proud palace, Fashion's hallow'd fane, 640  
 Spreads wide her portals for the motley train,



Behold the new Petronius of the day,  
 Our arbiter of pleasure and of play !  
 There the hired eunuch, the Hesperian choir,  
 The melting lute, the soft lascivious lyre,  
 The song from Italy, the step from France,  
 The midnight orgy, and the mazy dance,  
 The smile of beauty, and the flush of wine,  
 For fops, fools, gamesters, knaves, and lords combine :  
 Each to his humour—Comus all allows ; 650  
 Champaign, dice, music, or your neighbour's spouse.  
 Talk not to us, ye starving sons of trade !  
 Of piteous ruin, which ourselves have made ;  
 In Plenty's sunshine Fortune's minions bask,  
 Nor think of poverty, except "en masque,"  
 When for the night some lately titled ass  
 Appears the beggar which his grandsire was.  
 The curtain dropp'd, the gay burletta o'er,  
 The audience take their turn upon the floor :  
 Now round the room the circling dow'gers sweep, 660  
 Now in loose waltz the thin-clad daughters leap ;  
 The first in lengthen'd line majestic swim,  
 The last display the free unfetter'd limb !  
 Those for Hibernia's lusty sons repair  
 With art the charms which nature could not spare ;  
 These after husbands wing their eager flight,  
 Nor leave much mystery for the nuptial night.

Oh ! blest retreats of infamy and ease,  
 Where, all forgotten but the power to please,  
 Each maid may give a loose to genial thought, 670  
 Each swain may teach new systems, or be taught :  
 There the blithe youngster, just return'd from Spain,  
 Cuts the light pack, or calls the rattling main ;  
 The jovial caster's set, and seven's the nick,  
 Or—done !—a thousand on the coming trick !  
 If, mad with loss, existence 'gins to tire,  
 And all your hope or wish is to expire,  
 Here's Powell's pistol ready for your life,  
 And, kinder still, two Pagets for your wife ;

Fit consummation of an earthly race  
 Begun in folly, ended in disgrace ;  
 While none but menials o'er the bed of death,  
 Wash thy red wounds, or watch thy wavering breath,  
 Traduced by liars, and forgot by all,  
 The mangled victim of a drunken brawl,  
 To live like Clodius, and like Falkland fall. 680

Truth ! rouse some genuine bard, and guide his hand  
 To drive this pestilence from out the land.  
 E'en I—least thinking of a thoughtless throng,  
 Just skill'd to know the right and choose the wrong,  
 Freed at that age when reason's shield is lost, 691  
 To fight my course through passion's countless host,  
 Whom every path of pleasure's flowery way  
 Has lured in turn, and all have led astray—  
 E'en I must raise my voice, e'en I must feel  
 Such scenes, such men, destroy the public weal :  
 Although some kind, censorious friend will say,  
 " What art thou better, meddling fool, than they ? "  
 And every brother rake will smile to see  
 That miracle, a moralist in me. 700  
 No matter—when some bard in virtue strong,  
 Gifford perchance, shall raise the chastening song,  
 Then sleep my pen for ever ! and my voice  
 Be only heard to hail him, and rejoice ;  
 Rejoice, and yield my feeble praise, though I  
 May feel the lash that Virtue must apply.

As for the smaller fry, who swarm in shoals,  
 From silly Hafiz up to simple Bowles,  
 Why should we call them from their dark abode,  
 In broad St. Giles's or in Tottenham-road ? 710  
 Or (since some men of fashion nobly dare  
 To scrawl in verse) from Bond-street or the Square ?  
 If things of ton their harmless lays indite,  
 Most wisely doom'd to shun the public sight,  
 What harm ? in spite of every critic elf,  
 Sir T. may read his stanzas to himself ;



Miles Andrews still his strength in couplets try,  
 And live in prologues, though his dramas die :  
 Lords too are bards, such things at times befall,  
 And 'tis some praise in peers to write at all. 720  
 Yet, did or taste or reason sway the times,  
 Ah ! who would take their titles with their rhymes ?  
 Roscommon ! Sheffield ! with your spirits fled,  
 No future laurels deck a noble head ;  
 No muse will cheer, with renovating smile,  
 The paralytic puling of Carlisle.  
 The puny schoolboy and his early lay  
 Men pardon, if his follies pass away ;  
 But who forgives the senior's ceaseless verse,  
 Whose hairs grow hoary as his rhymes grow worse ?  
 What heterogeneous honours deck the peer ! 731  
 Lord, rhymester, petit-maitre, and pamphleteer !  
 So dull in youth, so drivelling in his age,  
 His scenes alone had damn'd our sinking stage ;  
 But managers for once cried, " Hold, enough ! "  
 Nor drugg'd their audience with the tragic stuff.  
 Yet at their judgment let his lordship laugh,  
 And case his volumes in congenial calf ;  
 Yes ! doff that covering, where morocco shines,  
 And hang a calf-skin on those recreant lines. 740

With you, ye Druids ! rich in native lead,  
 Who daily scribble for your daily bread ;  
 With you I war not : Gifford's heavy hand  
 Has crush'd, without remorse, your numerous band.  
 On " all the talents " vent your venal spleen ;  
 Want is your plea, let pity be your screen.  
 Let monodies on Fox regale your crew,  
 And Melville's Mantle prove a blanket too !  
 One common Lethe waits each hapless bard,  
 And, peace be with you ! 'tis your best reward. 750  
 Such damning fame as Dunciads only give  
 Could bid your lines beyond a morning live ;  
 But now at once your fleeting labours close,  
 With names of greater note in blest repose.



Far be 't from me unkindly to upbraid  
 The lovely Rosa's prose in masquerade,  
 Whose strains, the faithful echoes of her mind,  
 Leave wondering comprehension far behind.  
 Though Crusca's bards no more our journals fill,  
 Some stragglers skirmish round the columns still ; 760  
 Last of the howling host which once was Bell's,  
 Matilda snivels yet, and Hafiz yells ;  
 And Merry's metaphors appear anew,  
 Chain'd to the signature of O. P. Q.

When some brisk youth, the tenant of a stall,  
 Employs a pen less pointed than his awl,  
 Leaves his snug shop, forsakes his store of shoes,  
 St. Crispin quits, and cobbles for the muse,  
 Heavens ! how the vulgar stare ! how crowds applaud !  
 How ladies read, and literati laud ! 770  
 If chance some wicked wag should pass his jest,  
 'Tis sheer ill-nature—don't the world know best ?  
 Genius must guide when wits admire the rhyme,  
 And Capel Lofft declares 'tis quite sublime.  
 Hear, then, ye happy sons of needless trade !  
 Swains ! quit the plough, resign the useless spade !  
 Lo ! Burns and Bloomfield, nay, a greater far,  
 Gifford was born beneath an adverse star,  
 Forsook the labours of a servile state,  
 Stemm'd the rude storm, and triumph'd over fate :  
 Then why no more ? if Phoebus smiled on you, 781  
 Bloomfield ! why not on brother Nathan too ?  
 Him too the mania, not the muse, has seized ;  
 Not inspiration, but a mind diseased :  
 And now no boor can seek his last abode,  
 No common be enclosed without an ode.  
 Oh ! since increased refinement deigns to smile  
 On Britain's sons, and bless our genial isle,  
 Let poesy go forth, pervade the whole,  
 Alike the rustic, and mechanic soul ! 790  
 Ye tuneful cobblers ! still your notes prolong,  
 Compose at once a slipper and a song ;

So shall the fair your handywork peruse,  
Your sonnets sure shall please—perhaps your shoes.  
May Moorland weavers boast Pindaric skill,  
And tailors' lays be longer than their bill !  
While punctual beaux reward the grateful notes,  
And pay for poems—when they pay for coats.

To the famed throng now paid the tribute due,  
Neglected genius ! let me turn to you. 800  
Come forth, oh Campbell ! give thy talents scope ;  
Who dares aspire if thou must cease to hope ?  
And thou, melodious Rogers ! rise at last,  
Recall the pleasing memory of the past ;  
Arise ! let blest remembrance still inspire,  
And strike to wonted tones thy hallow'd lyre ;  
Restore Apollo to his vacant throne,  
Assert thy country's honour and thine own.  
What ! must deserted Poesy still weep  
Where her last hopes with pious Cowper sleep ? 810  
Unless, perchance, from his cold bier she turns,  
To deck the turf that wraps her minstrel, Burns !  
No ! though contempt hath mark'd the spurious brood,  
The race who rhyme from folly, or for food,  
Yet still some genuine sons 'tis hers to boast,  
Who, least affecting, still affect the most :  
Feel as they write, and write but as they feel—  
Bear witness Gifford, Sotheby, Macneil.

“ Why slumbers Gifford ? ” once was ask'd in vain ;  
Why slumbers Gifford ? let us ask again. 820  
Are there no follies for his pen to purge ?  
Are there no fools whose backs demand the scourge ?  
Are there no sins for satire's bard to greet ?  
Stalks not gigantic Vice in every street ?  
Shall peers or princes tread pollution's path,  
And 'scape alike the law's and muse's wrath ?  
Nor blaze with guilty glare through future time,  
Eternal beacons of consummate crime ?  
Arouse thee, Gifford ! be thy promise claim'd,  
Make bad men better, or at least ashamed. 830



Unhappy White ! while life was in its spring,  
 And thy young muse just waved her joyous wing,  
 The spoiler swept that soaring lyre away,  
 Which else had sounded an immortal lay.  
 Oh ! what a noble heart was here undone,  
 When Science' self destroy'd her favourite son !  
 Yes, she too much indulged thy fond pursuit,  
 She sow'd the seeds, but death has reap'd the fruit.  
 'Twas thine own genius gave the final blow,  
 And help'd to plant the wound that laid thee low :  
 So the struck eagle, stretch'd upon the plain, 84r  
 No more through rolling clouds to soar again,  
 View'd his own feather on the fatal dart,  
 And wing'd the shaft that quiver'd in his heart ;  
 Keen were his pangs, but keener far to feel  
 He nursed the pinion which impell'd the steel ;  
 While the same plumage that had warm'd his nest  
 Drank the last life-drop of his bleeding breast.

There be who say, in these enlighten'd days,  
 That splendid lies are all the poet's praise ; 85o  
 That strain'd invention, ever on the wing,  
 Alone impels the modern bard to sing :  
 'Tis true, that all who rhyme—nay, all who write,  
 Shrink from that fatal word to genius—trite ;  
 Yet Truth sometimes will lend her noblest fires,  
 And decorate the verse herself inspires :  
 This fact in Virtue's name let Crabbe attest ;  
 Though nature's sternest painter, yet the best.

And here let Shee and Genius find a place,  
 Whose pen and pencil yield an equal grace ; 86c  
 To guide whose hand the sister arts combine,  
 And trace the poet's or the painter's line ;  
 Whose magic touch can bid the canvas glow,  
 Or pour the easy rhyme's harmonious flow ;  
 While honours, doubly merited, attend  
 The poet's rival, but the painter's friend.

Blest is the man who dares approach the bower  
 Where dwelt the muses at their natal hour ;



Whose steps have press'd, whose eye has mark'd afar,  
The clime that nursed the sons of song and war, 870  
The scenes which glory still must hover o'er,  
Her place of birth, her own Achaian shore.  
But doubly blest is he whose heart expands  
With hallow'd feelings for those classic lands ;  
Who rends the veil of ages long gone by,  
And views their remnants with a poet's eye !  
Wright ! 'twas thy happy lot at once to view  
Those shores of glory, and to sing them too ;  
And sure no common muse inspired thy pen  
To hail the land of gods and godlike men. 880

And you, associate bards ! who snatch'd to light  
Those gems too long withheld from modern sight ;  
Whose mingling taste combined to cull the wreath  
Where Attic flowers Aonian odours breathe,  
And all their renovated fragrance flung  
To grace the beauties of your native tongue ;  
Now let those minds, that nobly could transfuse  
The glorious spirit of the Grecian muse,  
Though soft the echo, scorn a borrow'd tone :  
Resign Achaia's lyre, and strike your own. 890

Let these, or such as these, with just applause,  
Restore the muse's violated laws ;  
But not in flimsy Darwin's pompous chime,  
That mighty master of unmeaning rhyme,  
Whose gilded cymbals, more adorn'd than clear,  
The eye delighted, but fatigued the ear ;  
In show the simple lyre could once surpass,  
But now, worn down, appear in native brass ;  
While all his train of hovering sylphs around  
Evaporate in similes and sound : 900  
Him let them shun, with him let tinsel die :  
False glare attracts, but more offends the eye.

Yet let them not to vulgar Wordsworth stoop,  
The meanest object of the lowly group,  
Whose verse, of all but childish prattle void,  
Seems blessed harmony to Lamb and Lloyd :

Let them—but hold, my muse, nor dare to teach  
 A strain far, far beyond thy humble reach :  
 The native genius with their being given  
 Will point the path, and peal their notes to heaven.

And thou, too, Scott ! resign to minstrels rude 911  
 The wilder slogan of a border feud :  
 Let others spin their meagre lines for hire ;  
 Enough for genius, if itself inspire !  
 Let Southey sing, although his teeming muse,  
 Prolific every spring, be too profuse ;  
 Let simple Wordsworth chime his childish verse,  
 And brother Coleridge lull the babe at nurse ;  
 Let spectre-mongering Lewis aim, at most,  
 To rouse the galleries, or to raise a ghost ; 920  
 Let Moore still sigh ; let Strangford steal from Moore,  
 And swear that Camoëns sang such notes of yore ;  
 Let Hayley hobble on, Montgomery rave,  
 And godly Grahame chant a stupid stave :  
 Let sonneteering Bowles his strains refine,  
 And whine and whimper to the fourteenth line ;  
 Let Stott, Carlisle, Matilda, and the rest  
 Of Grub Street, and of Grosvenor Place the best,  
 Scrawl on, till death release us from the strain,  
 Or Common Sense assert her rights again. 930  
 But thou, with powers that mock the aid of praise,  
 Shouldst leave to humbler bards ignoble lays :  
 Thy country's voice, the voice of all the Nine,  
 Demand a hallow'd harp—that harp is thine.  
 Say ! will not Caledonia's annals yield  
 The glorious record of some nobler field,  
 Than the wild foray of a plundering clan,  
 Whose proudest deeds disgrace the name of man ?  
 Or Marmion's acts of darkness, fitter food  
 For Sherwood's outlaw tales of Robin Hood ? 940  
 Scotland ! still proudly claim thy native bard,  
 And be thy praise his first, his best reward !  
 Yet not with thee alone his name should live,  
 But own the vast renown a world can give :



Be known, perchance, when Albion is no more,  
 And tell the tale of what she was before ;  
 To future times her faded fame recall,  
 And save her glory, though his country fall.

Yet what avails the sanguine poet's hope,  
 To conquer ages, and with time to cope ? 950  
 New eras spread their wings, new nations rise,  
 And other victors fill the applauding skies ;  
 A few brief generations fleet along,  
 Whose sons forget the poet and his song :  
 E'en now, what once-loved minstrels scarce may claim  
 The transient mention of a dubious name !  
 When fame's loud trump hath blown its noblest blast,  
 Though long the sound, the echo sleeps at last ;  
 And glory, like the phoenix midst her fires,  
 Exhales her odours, blazes, and expires. 960

Shall hoary Granta call her sable sons,  
 Expert in science, more expert at puns ?  
 Shall these approach the muse ? ah, no ! she flies,  
 Even from the tempting ore of Seaton's prize ;  
 Though printers condescend the press to soil  
 With rhyme by Hoare, and epic blank by Hoyle :  
 Not him whose page, if still upheld by whist,  
 Requires no sacred theme to bid us list.  
 Ye ! who in Granta's honours would surpass, 970  
 Must mount her Pegasus, a full-grown ass ;  
 A foal well worthy of her ancient dam,  
 Whose Helicon is duller than her Cam.

There Clarke, still striving piteously " to please,"  
 Forgetting doggrel leads not to degrees,  
 A would-be satirist, a hired buffoon,  
 A monthly scribbler of some low lampoon,  
 Condemn'd to drudge, the meanest of the mean,  
 And furbish falsehoods for a magazine,  
 Devotes to scandal his congenial mind ;  
 Himself a living libel on mankind. 980



Oh ! dark asylum of a Vandal race !  
 At once the boast of learning, and disgrace !  
 So lost to Phoebus, that nor Hodgson's verse  
 Can make thee better, nor poor Hewson's worse.  
 But where fair Isis rolls her purer wave,  
 The partial muse delighted loves to lave ;  
 On her green banks a greener wreath she wove,  
 To crown the bards that haunt her classic grove :  
 Where Richards wakes a genuine poet's fires,  
 And modern Britons glory in their sires.

990

For me, who, thus unask'd, have dared to tell  
 My country what her sons should know too well,  
 Zeal for her honour bade me here engage  
 The host of idiots that infest her age ;  
 No just applause her honour'd name shall lose,  
 As first in freedom, dearest to the muse.  
 Oh ! would thy bards but emulate thy fame,  
 And rise more worthy, Albion, of thy name !  
 What Athens was in science, Rome in power,  
 What Tyre appear'd in her meridian hour,  
 'Tis thine at once, fair Albion ! to have been—  
 Earth's chief dictatress, ocean's lovely queen :  
 But Rome decay'd, and Athens strew'd the plain,  
 And Tyre's proud piers lie shatter'd in the main ;  
 Like these, thy strength may sink, in ruin hurl'd,  
 And Britain fall, the bulwark of the world.  
 But let me cease, and dread Cassandra's fate,  
 With warning ever scoff'd at, till too late ;  
 To themes less lofty still my lay confine,  
 And urge thy bards to gain a name like thine.

1000

1010

Then, hapless Britain ! be thy rulers blest,  
 The senate's oracles, the people's jest !  
 Still hear thy motley orators dispense  
 The flowers of rhetoric, though not of sense,  
 While Canning's colleagues hate him for his wit,  
 And old dame Portland fills the place of Pitt.

Yet once again, adieu ! ere this the sail  
 That wafts me hence is shivering in the gale ;

And Afric's coast and Calpe's adverse height,  
 And Stamboul's minarets must greet my sight : 1020  
 Thence shall I stray through beauty's native clime,  
 Where Kaff is clad in rocks, and crown'd with snows  
 sublime.

But should I back return, no tempting press  
 Shall drag my journal from the desk's recess ;  
 Let coxcombs, printing as they come from far,  
 Snatch his own wreath of ridicule from Carr ;  
 Let Aberdeen and Elgin still pursue  
 The shade of fame through regions of virtù ;  
 Waste useless thousands on their Phidian freaks,  
 Misshapen monuments and maim'd antiques ; 1030  
 And make their grand saloons a general mart  
 For all the mutilated blocks of art :  
 Of Dardan tours let dilettanti tell,  
 I leave topography to rapid Gell ;  
 And, quite content, no more shall interpose  
 To stun the public ear—at least with prose.

Thus far I've held my undisturb'd career,  
 Prepared for rancour, steel'd 'gainst selfish fear :  
 This thing of rhyme I ne'er disdain'd to own—  
 Though not obtrusive, yet not quite unknown : 1040  
 My voice was heard again, though not so loud,  
 My page, though nameless, never disavow'd ;  
 And now at once I tear the veil away :—  
 Cheer on the pack ! the quarry stands at bay,  
 Unscared by all the din of Melbourne House,  
 By Lambo's resentment, or by Holland's spouse,  
 By Jeffrey's harmless pistol, Hallam's rage,  
 Edina's brawny sons and brimstone page.  
 Our men in buckram shall have blows enough,  
 And feel they too are " penetrable stuff : " 1050  
 And though I hope not hence unscathed to go,  
 Who conquers me shall find a stubborn foe.  
 The time hath been, when no harsh sound would fall  
 From lips that now may seem imbued with gall ;  
 Nor fools nor follies tempt me to despise  
 The meanest thing that crawl'd beneath my eyes :



But now, so callous grown, so changed since youth,  
 I've learn'd to think, and sternly speak the truth ;  
 Learn'd to deride the critic's starch decree,  
 And break him on the wheel he meant for me ; 1060  
 To spurn the rod a scribbler bids me kiss,  
 Nor care if courts and crowds applaud or hiss :  
 Nay more, though all my rival rhymesters frown,  
 I too can hunt a poetaster down ;  
 And, arm'd in proof, the gauntlet cast at once  
 To Scotch marauder, and to southern dunce.  
 Thus much I've dared ; if my incondite lay  
 Hath wrong'd these righteous times, let others say ;  
 This, let the world, which knows not how to spare,  
 Yet rarely blames unjustly, now declare. 1070

## TO ATHENS

## FROM ' THE CURSE OF MINERVA '

SLOW sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,  
 Along Morea's hills the setting sun ;  
 Not, as in northern climes, obscurely bright,  
 But one unclouded blaze of living light ;  
 O'er the hush'd deep the yellow beam he throws,  
 Gilds the green wave that trembles as it glows ;  
 On old Aegina's rock and Hydra's isle  
 The god of gladness sheds his parting smile ;  
 O'er his own regions lingering loves to shine,  
 Though there his altars are no more divine. 10  
 Descending fast, the mountain-shadows kiss  
 Thy glorious gulf, unconquer'd Salamis !  
 Their azure arches through the long expanse,  
 More deeply purpled, meet his mellowing glance,  
 And tenderest tints, along their summits driven,  
 Mark his gay course, and own the hues of heaven ;  
 Till, darkly shaded from the land and deep,  
 Behind his Delphian rock he sinks to sleep.



On such an eve his palest beam he cast  
When, Athens ! here thy wisest look'd his last. 20  
How watch'd thy better sons his farewell ray,  
That closed their murder'd sage's latest day !  
Not yet—not yet—Sol pauses on the hill,  
The precious hour of parting lingers still ;  
But sad his light to agonizing eyes,  
And dark the mountain's once delightful dyes ;  
Gloom o'er the lovely land he seem'd to pour,  
The land where Phoebus never frown'd before ;  
But ere he sunk below Cithaeron's head,  
The cup of woe was quaff'd—the spirit fled ; 30  
The soul of him that scorn'd to fear or fly,  
Who lived and died as none can live or die.

But, lo ! from high Hymettus to the plain  
The queen of night asserts her silent reign ;  
No murky vapour, herald of the storm,  
Hides her fair face, or girds her glowing form ;  
With cornice glimmering as the moonbeams play,  
There the white column greets her grateful ray,  
And bright around, with quivering beams beset,  
Her emblem sparkles o'er the minaret : 40  
The groves of olive scatter'd dark and wide,  
Where meek Cephissus sheds his scanty tide,  
The cypress saddening by the sacred mosque,  
The gleaming turret of the gay kiosk,  
And sad and sombre 'mid the holy calm,  
Near Theseus' fane, yon solitary palm ;  
All, tinged with varied hues, arrest the eye ;  
And dull were his that passed them heedless by.

Again the Aegean, heard no more afar,  
Lulls his chafed breast from elemental war : 50  
Again his waves in milder tints unfold  
Their long expanse of sapphire and of gold,  
Mix'd with the shades of many a distant isle  
That frown, where gentler ocean deigns to smile.

As thus, within the walls of Pallas' fane,  
I mark'd the beauties of the land and main,  
Alone, and friendless, on the magic shore,  
Whose arts and arms but live in poets' lore ;  
Oft as the matchless dome I turn'd to scan,  
Sacred to gods, but not secure from man,  
The past return'd, the present seem'd to cease,  
And Glory knew no clime beyond her Greece !

# THE VISION OF JUDGMENT

## I

SAINT PETER sat by the celestial gate :

His keys were rusty, and the lock was dull,  
So little trouble had been given of late ;

Not that the place by any means was full,  
But since the Gallic era " eighty-eight "

The devils had ta'en a longer, stronger pull,  
And " a pull altogether," as they say  
At sea—which drew most souls another way.

## II

The angels all were singing out of tune,  
And hoarse with having little else to do,  
Excepting to wind up the sun and moon,  
Or curb a runaway young star or two,  
Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon  
Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal blue,  
Splitting some planet with its playful tail,  
As boats are sometimes by a wanton whale.

10

## III

The guardian seraphs had retired on high,  
Finding their charges past all care below ;  
Terrestrial business fill'd nought in the sky  
Save the recording angel's black bureau ;  
Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply  
With such rapidity of vice and woe,  
That he had stripp'd off both his wings in quills,  
And yet was in arrear of human ills.

20



## IV

His business so augmented of late years,  
 That he was forced, against his will no doubt,  
 (Just like those cherubs, earthly ministers,)  
 For some resource to turn himself about,  
 And claim the help of his celestial peers,  
 To aid him ere he should be quite worn out 30  
 By the increased demand for his remarks :  
 Six angels and twelve saints were named his clerks.

## V

This was a handsome board—at least for heaven ;  
 And yet they had even then enough to do,  
 So many conquerors' cars were daily driven,  
 So many kingdoms fitted up anew ;  
 Each day, too, slew its thousands six or seven,  
 Till at the crowning carnage, Waterloo,  
 They threw their pens down in divine disgust—  
 The page was so besmear'd with blood and dust. 40

## VI

This by the way ; 'tis not mine to record  
 What angels shrink from : even the very devil  
 On this occasion his own work abhorr'd,  
 So surfeited with the infernal revel :  
 Though he himself had sharpen'd every sword,  
 It almost quench'd his innate thirst of evil.  
 (Here Satan's sole good work deserves insertion—  
 'Tis, that he has both generals in reversion.)

## VII

Let 's skip a few short years of hollow peace,  
 Which peopled earth no better, hell as wont, 50  
 And heaven none—they form the tyrant's lease,  
 With nothing but new names subscribed upon 't ;  
 'Twill one day finish : meantime they increase,  
 "With seven heads and ten horns," and all in front,  
 Like Saint John's foretold beast ; but ours are born  
 Less formidable in the head than horn.

## VIII

In the first year of freedom's second dawn

Died George the Third ; although no tyrant, one  
Who shielded tyrants, till each sense withdrawn

Left him nor mental nor external sun :

60

A better farmer ne'er brush'd dew from lawn,

A worse king never left a realm undone !

He died—but left his subjects still behind,

One half as mad—and t'other no less blind.

## IX

He died ! his death made no great stir on earth :

His burial made some pomp ; there was profusion  
Of velvet, gilding, brass, and no great dearth

Of aught but tears—save those shed by collusion. *franklin*

For these things may be bought at their true worth ;

Of elegy there was the due infusion—

7c

Bought also ; and the torches, cloaks, and banners,

Heralds, and relics of old Gothic manners,

## X

Form'd a sepulchral melodrame. Of all

The fools who flock'd to swell or see the show,

Who cared about the corpse ? The funeral

Made the attraction, and the black the woe.

There throbb'd not there a thought which pierced the  
pall ;

And when the gorgeous coffin was laid low,

It seem'd the mockery of hell to fold

The rottenness of eighty years in gold.

8c

## XI

So mix his body with the dust ! It might

Return to what it *must* far sooner, were

The natural compound left alone to fight

Its way back into earth, and fire, and air ;

But the unnatural balsams merely blight

What nature made him at his birth, as bare

As the mere million's base unummied clay—

Yet all his spices but prolong decay.



*Officer who interferes when suppression of facts is alleged*  
 XII

He's dead—and upper earth with him has done ;

He's buried ; save the undertaker's bill, 90  
 Or lapidary scrawl, the world is gone

For him, unless he left a German will :

But where's the proctor who will ask his son ?

In whom his qualities are reigning still,  
 Except that household virtue, most uncommon,  
 Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman.

## XIII

“ God save the king ! ” It is a large economy

In God to save the like ; but if he will  
 Be saving, all the better ; for not one am I  
 Of those who think damnation better still : 100

I hardly know too if not quite alone am I

In this small hope of bettering future ill  
 ✓ By circumscribing, with some slight restriction,  
 The eternity of hell's hot jurisdiction.

## XIV

I know this is unpopular ; I know

'Tis blasphemous ; I know one may be damn'd  
 For hoping no one else may e'er be so ;

I know my catechism ; I know we're cramm'd  
 With the best doctrines till we quite o'erflow ;

I know that all save England's church have shamm'd,  
 And that the other twice two hundred churches 111  
 And synagogues have made a *damn'd* bad purchase.

## XV

God help us all ! God help me too ! I am,

God knows, as helpless as the devil can wish,  
 And not a whit more difficult to damn,

Than is to bring to land a late-hook'd fish,  
 Or to the butcher to purvey the lamb ;

Not that I'm fit for such a noble dish,  
 As one day will be that immortal fry  
 Of almost everybody born to die. 120



## XVI

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,  
 And nodded o'er his keys ; when, lo ! there came  
 A wondrous noise he had not heard of late—  
 A rushing sound of wind, and stream, and flame ;  
 In short, a roar of things extremely great,  
 Which would have made aught save a saint exclaim ;  
 But he, with first a start and then a wink,  
 Said, " There 's another star gone out, I think ! "

## XVII

But ere he could return to his repose,  
 A cherub flapp'd his right wing o'er his eyes— 130  
 At which St. Peter yawn'd, and rubb'd his nose :  
 • " Saint porter," said the angel, " prithee rise ! "  
 Waving a goodly wing, which glow'd, as glows  
 An earthly peacock's tail, with heavenly dyes :  
 To which the saint replied, " Well, what 's the matter ?  
 " Is Lucifer come back with all this clatter ? "

## XVIII

" No," quoth the cherub ; " George the Third is dead."  
 " And who is George the Third ? " replied the apostle :  
 " *What George ? what Third ?* " " The king of England,"  
 said

The angel. " Well ! he won't find kings to jostle  
 Him on his way ; but does he wear his head ? 141  
 Because the last we saw here had a tustle,  
 And ne'er would have got into heaven's good graces,  
 Had he not flung his head in all our faces.

## XIX

" He was, if I remember, king of France ;  
 That head of his, which could not keep a crown  
 On earth, yet ventured in my face to advance  
 A claim to those of martyrs—like my own :  
 If I had had my sword, as I had once  
 When I cut ears off, I had cut him down ; 150  
 But having but my *keys*, and not my brand,  
 I only knock'd his head from out his hand.

## XX

“ And then he set up such a headless howl,  
 That all the saints came out and took him in ;  
 And there he sits by St. Paul, cheek by jowl ;  
 That fellow Paul—the parvenù ! The skin  
 Of St. Bartholomew, which makes his cowl  
 In heaven, and upon earth redeem’d his sin,  
 So as to make a martyr, never sped  
 Better than did this weak and wooden head. 160

## XXI

“ But had it come up here upon its shoulders,  
 There would have been a different tale to tell :  
 The fellow-feeling in the saint’s beholders  
 Seems to have acted on them like a spell ;  
 And so this very foolish head heaven solders  
 Back on its trunk : it may be very well,  
 And seems the custom here to overthrow  
 Whatever has been wisely done below.”

## XXII

The angel answer’d, “ Peter ! do not pout :  
 The king who comes has head and all entire, 170  
 And never knew much what it was about—  
 He did as doth the puppet—by its wire,  
 And will be judged like all the rest, no doubt :  
 My business and your own is not to inquire  
 Into such matters, but to mind our cue—  
 Which is to act as we are bid to do.”

## XXIII

While thus they spake, the angelic caravan,  
 Arriving like a rush of mighty wind,  
 Cleaving the fields of space, as doth the swan  
 Some silver stream (say Ganges, Nile, or Inde, 180  
 Or Thames, or Tweed), and midst them an old man  
 With an old soul, and both extremely blind,  
 Halted before the gate, and in his shroud  
 Seated their fellow-traveller on a cloud.



## XXIV

But bringing up the rear of this bright host  
 A Spirit of a different aspect waved  
 His wings, like thunder-clouds above some coast  
 Whose barren beach with frequent wrecks is paved ;  
 His brow was like the deep when tempest-toss'd ;  
 Fierce and unfathomable thoughts engraved 190  
 Eternal wrath on his immortal face,  
 And *where* he gazed a gloom pervaded space.

## XXV

As he drew near, he gazed upon the gate  
 Ne'er to be enter'd more by him or Sin,  
 With such a glance of supernatural hate,  
 As made Saint Peter wish himself within ;  
 He patter'd with his keys at a great rate,  
 And sweated through his apostolic skin :  
 Of course his perspiration was but ichor, *fluid in veins of god* 200  
 Or some such other spiritual liquor.

## XXVI

The very cherubs huddled all together,  
 Like birds when soars the falcon ; and they felt  
 A tingling to the tip of every feather,  
 And form'd a circle like Orion's belt  
 Around their poor old charge ; who scarce knew whither  
 His guards had led him, though they gently dealt  
 With royal manes (for by many stories,  
 And true, we learn the angels all are Tories). /

## XXVII

As things were in this posture, the gate flew  
 Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges 210  
 Flung over space an universal hue  
 Of many-colour'd flame, until its tinges  
 Reach'd even our speck of earth, and made a new  
 Aurora borealis spread its fringes  
 O'er the North Pole ; the same seen, when ice-bound,  
 By Captain Parry's crew, in " Melville's Sound."



## XXVIII

And from the gate thrown open issued beaming  
 A beautiful and mighty Thing of Light,  
 Radiant with glory, like a banner streaming  
 Victorious from some world-o'erthrowing fight : 220  
 My poor comparisons must needs be teeming  
 With earthly likenesses, for here the night  
 Of clay obscures our best conceptions, saving  
 ✓ Johanna Southcote, or Bob Southey raving.

## XXIX

'Twas the archangel Michael : all men know  
 The make of angels and archangels, since  
 There 's scarce a scribbler has not one to show,  
 From the fiends' leader to the angels' prince.  
 There also are some altar-pieces, though  
 I really can't say that they much evince 230  
 ✓ One's inner notions of immortal spirits ;  
 But let the connoisseurs explain *their* merits.

## XXX

Michael flew forth in glory and in good ;  
 A goodly work of him from whom all glory  
 And good arise ; the portal past—he stood ;  
 Before him the young cherubs and saints hoary—  
 (I say *young*, begging to be understood  
 By looks, not years ; and should be very sorry  
 To state, they were not older than St. Peter,  
 But merely that they seem'd a little sweeter). 240

## XXXI

The cherubs and the saints bow'd down before  
 That arch-angelic hierarch, the first  
 Of essences angelical, who wore  
 The aspect of a god ; but this ne'er nursed  
 Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose core  
 - No thought, save for his Master's service, durst  
 Intrude, however glorified and high ;  
 He knew him but the viceroy of the sky.

## XXXII

He and the sombre, silent Spirit met—  
 They knew each other both for good and ill ; 250  
 Such was their power, that neither could forget  
 His former friend and future foe ; but still  
 There was a high, immortal, proud regret  
 In either's eye, as if 'twere less their will  
 Than destiny to make the eternal years  
 Their date of war, and their " champ clos " the spheres.

## XXXIII

But here they were in neutral space : we know  
 From Job, that Satan hath the power to pay  
 A heavenly visit thrice a year or so ;  
 And that the " sons of God," like those of clay, 260  
 Must keep him company ; and we might show  
 From the same book, in how polite a way  
 The dialogue is held between the Powers  
 Of Good and Evil—but 'twould take up hours.

## XXXIV

And this is not a theologic tract,  
 To prove with Hebrew and with Arabic,  
 If Job be allegory or a fact,  
 But a true narrative ; and thus I pick  
 From out the whole but such and such an act  
 As sets aside the slightest thought of trick. 270  
 'Tis every tittle true, beyond suspicion,  
 And accurate as any other vision.

## XXXV

The spirits were in neutral space, before  
 The gate of heaven ; like eastern thresholds is  
 The place where Death's grand cause is argued o'er,  
 And souls despatch'd to that world or to this ;  
 And therefore Michael and the other wore  
 A civil aspect : though they did not kiss,  
 Yet still between his Darkness and his Brightness  
 There pass'd a mutual glance of great politeness. 280



## XXXVI

The Archangel bow'd, not like a modern beau,  
 But with a graceful oriental bend,  
 Pressing one radiant arm just where below  
 The heart in good men is supposed to tend ;  
 He turn'd as to an equal, not too low,  
 But kindly ; Satan met his ancient friend  
 With more hauteur, as might an old Castilian  
 Poor noble meet a mushroom rich civilian.

## XXXVII

He merely bent his diabolic brow  
 An instant ; and then raising it, he stood 290  
 In act to assert his right or wrong, and show  
 Cause why King George by no means could or should  
 Make out a case to be exempt from woe  
 Eternal, more than other kings, endued  
 With better sense and hearts, whom history mentions,  
 Who long have " paved hell with their good intentions."

## XXXVIII

Michael began : " What wouldst thou with this man,  
 Now dead, and brought before the Lord ? What ill  
 Hath he wrought since his mortal race began,  
 That thou canst claim him ? Speak ! and do thy 300  
 will,  
 If it be just : if in this earthly span  
 He hath been greatly failing to fulfil  
 His duties as a king and mortal, say,  
 And he is thine ; if not, let him have way."

## XXXIX

" Michael ! " replied the Prince of Air, " even here  
 Before the gate of Him thou servest, must  
 I claim my subject : and will make appear  
 That as he was my worshipper in dust,  
 So shall he be in spirit, although dear  
 To thee and thine, because nor wine nor lust 310  
 Were of his weaknesses ; yet on the throne  
 He reign'd o'er millions to serve me alone.



## XL

“ Look to *our* earth, or rather *mine* ; it was,  
*Once, more* thy master's : but I triumph not  
 In this poor planet's conquest ; nor, alas !  
 Need he thou servest envy me my lot :  
 With all the myriads of bright worlds which pass  
 In worship round him, he may have forgot  
 Yon weak creation of such paltry things :  
 I think few worth damnation save their kings,— 320

## XLI

“ And these but as a kind of quit-rent, to  
 Assert my right as lord : and even had  
 I such an inclination, 'twere (as you  
 Well know) superfluous ; they are grown so bad,  
 That hell has nothing better left to do  
 Than leave them to themselves : so much more mad  
 And evil by their own internal curse,  
 Heaven cannot make them better, nor I worse.

## XLII

“ Look to the earth, I said, and say again :  
 When this old, blind, mad, helpless, weak, poor  
     worm 330  
 Began in youth's first bloom and flush to reign,  
 The world and he both wore a different form,  
 And much of earth and all the watery plain  
 Of ocean call'd him king : through many a storm  
 His isles had floated on the abyss of time ;  
 For the rough virtues chose them for their clime.

## XLIII

“ He came to his sceptre young ; he leaves it old :  
 Look to the state in which he found his realm,  
 And left it ; and his annals too behold,  
 How to a minion first he gave the helm ; 340  
 How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold,  
 The beggar's vice, which can but overwhelm  
 The meanest hearts ; and for the rest, but glance  
 Thine eye along America and France.

## XLIV

“ ’Tis true, he was a tool from first to last  
 (I have the workmen safe) ; but as a tool  
 So let him be consumed. From out the past  
 Of ages, since mankind have known the rule  
 Of monarchs—from the bloody rolls amass’d  
 Of sin and slaughter—from the Cæsar’s school, 350  
 Take the worst pupil ; and produce a reign  
 More drench’d with gore, more cumber’d with the slain.

## XLV

“ He ever warr’d with freedom and the free :  
 Nations as men, home subjects, foreign foes,  
 So that they utter’d the word ‘ Liberty ! ’  
 Found George the Third their first opponent. Whose  
 History was ever stain’d as his will be  
 With national and individual woes ?  
 I grant his household abstinence ; I grant  
 His neutral virtues, which most monarchs want ; 360

## XLVI

‘ I know he was a constant consort ; own  
 He was a decent sire, and middling lord.  
 All this is much, and most upon a throne ;  
 As temperance, if at Apicius’ board,  
 Is more than at an anchorite’s supper shown  
 I grant him all the kindest can accord ;  
 And this was well for him, but not for those  
 Millions who found him what oppression chose.

*glutton in  
Tiberius's  
ref.*

## XLVII

“ The New World shook him off ; the Old yet groans  
 Beneath what he and his prepared, if not 370  
 Completed : he leaves heirs on many thrones  
 To all his vices, without what begot  
 Compassion for him—his tame virtues ; drones  
 Who sleep, or despots who have now forgot  
 A lesson which shall be re-taught them, wake  
 Upon the thrones of earth ; but let them quake !



## XLVIII

“ Five millions of the primitive, who hold  
 The faith which makes ye great on earth, implored  
 A *part* of that vast *all* they held of old,—  
 Freedom to worship—not alone your Lord, 380  
 Michael, but you, and you, Saint Peter ! Cold  
 Must be your souls, if you have not abhorr’d  
 The foe to Catholic participation  
 In all the license of a Christian nation.

## XLIX

“ True ! he allowed them to pray God ; but as  
 A consequence of prayer, refused the law  
 Which would have placed them upon the same base  
 With those who did not hold the saints in awe.”  
 But here Saint Peter started from his place,

And cried, “ You may the prisoner withdraw : 390  
 Ere heaven shall ope her portals to this Guelph, *ancestor*  
 While I am guard, may I be damn’d myself ! *of Br. royal*  
*family,*  
*supporter of Pope*

## L

“ Sooner will I with Cerberus exchange  
 My office (and *his* is no sinecure)  
 Than see this royal Bedlam bigot range  
 The azure fields of heaven, of that be sure ! ”  
 “ Saint ! ” replied Satan, “ you do well to avenge  
 The wrongs he made your satellites endure ;  
 And if to this exchange you should be given,  
 I’ll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to heaven ! ” 400

## LI

Here Michael interposed : “ Good saint ! and devil !

Pray, not so fast ; you both outrun discretion.  
 Saint Peter ! you were wont to be more civil :

Satan ! excuse this warmth of his expression,  
 And condescension to the vulgar’s level :

Even saints sometimes forget themselves in session.  
 Have you got more to say ? ” — “ No. ” — “ If you please,  
 I’ll trouble you to call your witnesses.”



## LII

Then Satan turn'd and waved his swarthy hand,  
 Which stirr'd with its electric qualities  
 Clouds farther off than we can understand, 410  
 Although we find him sometimes in our skies ;  
 Infernal thunder shook both sea and land  
 In all the planets, and hell's batteries  
 / Let off the artillery, which Milton mentions  
 As one of Satan's most sublime inventions.

## LIII

This was a signal unto such damn'd souls  
 As have the privilege of their damnation  
 Extended far beyond the mere controls  
 Of worlds past, present, or to come ; no station 420  
 Is theirs particularly in the rolls  
 Of Hell assign'd ; but where their inclination  
 Or business carries them in search of game,  
 They may range freely—being damn'd the same.

## LIV

They're proud of this—as very well they may,  
 It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key  
 Stuck in their loins ; or like to an "entré"  
 Up the back stairs, or such free-masonry.  
 / I borrow my comparisons from clay,  
 Being clay myself. Let not those spirits be 430  
 Offended with such base low likenesses ;  
 We know their posts are nobler far than these.

## LV

When the great signal ran from heaven to hell—  
 / About ten million times the distance reckon'd  
 From our sun to its earth, as we can tell  
 How much time it takes up, even to a second,  
 For every ray that travels to dispel  
 The fogs of London, through which, dimly beacon'd,  
 The weathercocks are gilt some thrice a year,  
 If that the *summer* is not too severe : 440

## LVI

I say that I can tell—'twas half a minute ;  
 I know the solar beams take up more time  
 Ere, pack'd up for their journey, they begin it ;  
 But then their telegraph is less sublime,  
 And if they ran a race, they would not win it  
 'Gainst Satan's couriers bound for their own clime.  
 The sun takes up some years for every ray  
 To reach its goal—the devil not half a day.

## LVII

Upon the verge of space, about the size  
 Of half-a-crown, a little speck appear'd 450  
 (I've seen a something like it in the skies ,  
 In the Ægean, ere a squall) ; it near'd,  
 And, growing bigger, took another guise ;  
 Like an aerial ship it tack'd, and steer'd, *changed*  
 Or *was* steer'd (I am doubtful of the grammar *course*  
 Of the last phrase, which makes the stanza stammer ;—

## LVIII

But take your choice) : and then it grew a cloud ; ,  
 And so it was—a cloud of witnesses.  
 But such a cloud ! No land e'er saw a crowd  
 Of locusts numerous as the heavens saw these ; 460  
 They shadow'd with their myriads space ; their loud  
 And varied cries were like those of wild geese  
 (If nations may be liken'd to a goose),  
 And realised the phrase of " hell broke loose."

## LIX

Here crash'd a sturdy oath of stout John Bull,  
 Who damn'd away his eyes as heretofore :  
*Irishman* There Paddy brogued " By Jasus ! "—" What 's your  
 wull ? "

The temperate Scot exclaim'd : the French ghost  
 swore

In certain terms I shan't translate in full,  
 As the first coachman will ; and 'midst the war,  
 The voice of Jonathan was heard to express, U.S.A.  
 " Our President is going to war, I guess."



Tahiti: Eastern Archipelago  
LX

Besides there were the Spaniard, Dutch, and Dane ;  
In short, an universal shoal of shades,

From Otaheite's isle to Salisbury Plain,

Of all climes and professions, years and trades,  
Ready to swear against the good king's reign,

Bitter as clubs in cards are against spades : *with common*

All summon'd by this grand "subpœna," to *person's attend*

Try if kings mayn't be damn'd like me or you. *at Court* 480

## LXI

When Michael saw this host, he first grew pale,

As angels can ; next, like Italian twilight,

He turn'd all colours—as a peacock's tail,

Or sunset streaming through a Gothic skylight

In some old abbey, or a trout not stale,

Or distant lightning on the horizon *by* night,

Or a fresh rainbow, or a grand review

Of thirty regiments in red, green, and blue.

## LXII

Then he address'd himself to Satan : " Why—

My good old friend, for such I deem you, though

Our different parties make us fight so shy,

491

I ne'er mistake you for a *personal* foe ;

Our difference is *political*, and I

Trust that, whatever may occur below,

You know my great respect for you : and this

Makes me regret whate'er you do amiss—

## LXIII

" Why, my dear Lucifer, would you abuse

My call for witnesses ? I did not mean

That you should half of earth and hell produce ;

'Tis even superfluous, since two honest, clean,

500

True testimonies are enough : we lose

Our time, nay, our eternity, between

The accusation and defence : if we

Hear both, 'twill stretch our immortality."



LXIV

*for electors in their choice of a member*  
 Satan replied, "To me the matter is  
 Indifferent, in a personal point of view :  
 I can have fifty better souls than this  
 With far less trouble than we have gone through  
 Already ; and I merely argued his  
 Late Majesty of Britain's case with you 510  
 Upon a point of form : you may dispose  
 Of him ; I've kings enough below, God knows ! "

LXV

Thus spoke the Demon (late call'd "multifaced"  
 By multo-scribbling Southey). "Then we'll call  
 One or two persons of the myriads placed  
 Around our congress, and dispense with all  
 The rest," quoth Michael : "Who may be so graced  
 As to speak first ? there's choice enough—who shall  
 It be ? " Then Satan answer'd, "There are many ;  
 But you may choose Jack Wilkes as well as any." 520

LXVI

A merry, cock-eyed, curious-looking sprite  
 Upon the instant started from the throng,  
 Dress'd in a fashion now forgotten quite ;  
 For all the fashions of the flesh stick long  
 By people in the next world ; where unite  
 All the costumes since Adam's, right or wrong,  
 From Eve's fig-leaf down to the petticoat,  
 Almost as scanty, of days less remote.

LXVII

The spirit look'd around upon the crowds  
 Assembled, and exclaim'd, "My friends of all 530  
 The spheres, we shall catch cold amongst these clouds ;  
 So let's to business : why this general call ?  
 If those are freeholders I see in shrouds,  
 And 'tis for an election that they bawl,  
 Behold a candidate with unturn'd coat !  
 Saint Peter, may I count upon your vote ? "

## LXVIII

“Sir,” replied Michael, “you mistake; these things  
 Are of a former life, and what we do  
 Above is more august; to judge of kings  
 Is the tribunal met: so now you know.” 540  
 “Then I presume those gentlemen with wings,”  
 Said Wilkes, “are cherubs; and that soul below  
 Looks much like George the Third, but to my mind  
 A good deal older—Bless me! is he blind?”

## LXIX

“He is what you behold him, and his doom  
 Depends upon his deeds,” the Angel said;  
 “If you have aught to arraign in him, the tomb  
 Gives license to the humblest beggar’s head  
 To lift itself against the loftiest.”—“Some,” 549  
 Said Wilkes, “don’t wait to see them laid in lead,  
 For such a liberty—and I, for one,  
 Have told them what I thought beneath the sun.”

## LXX

“Above the sun repeat, then, what thou hast  
 To urge against him,” said the Archangel. “Why,”  
 Replied the spirit, “since old scores are past,  
 Must I turn evidence? In faith, not I.  
 Besides, I beat him hollow at the last,  
 With all his Lords and Commons: in the sky  
 I don’t like ripping up old stories, since  
 His conduct was but natural in a prince.” 560

## LXXI

“Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to oppress  
 A poor unlucky devil without a shilling;  
 But then I blame the man himself much less *whq p. n.*  
 Than Bute and Grafton, and shall be unwilling  
 To see him punish’d here for their excess,  
 Since they were both damn’d long ago, and still in  
 Their place below: for me, I have forgiven,  
 And vote his *habeas corpus* into heaven.”



## LXXII

“Wilkes,” said the Devil, “I understand all this ;  
 You turn’d to half a courtier ere you died, 570  
 And seem to think it would not be amiss  
 To grow a whole one on the other side  
 Of Charon’s ferry ; you forget that *his*  
 Reign is concluded ; whatsoe’er betide,  
 He won’t be sovereign more : you’ve lost your labour,  
 For at the best he will but be your neighbour.

## LXXIII

“However, I knew what to think of it,  
 When I beheld you in your jesting way,  
 Flitting and whispering round about the spit  
 Where Belial, upon duty for the day, *talk, metaphors*  
 With Fox’s lard was basting William Pitt,  
 His pupil ; I knew what to think, I say : *(stitch ; cudgel)*  
 That fellow even in hell breeds farther ills ;  
 I’ll have him *gagg’d*—’twas one of his own bills.

*author of letters attacking G. F.*  
 LXXIV

“Call Junius !” From the crowd a shadow stalk’d,  
 And at the name there was a general squeeze,  
 So that the very ghosts no longer walk’d  
 In comfort, at their own aërial ease,  
 But were all ramm’d, and jamm’d (but to be balk’d,  
 As we shall see), and jostled hands and knees, 590  
 Like wind compress’d and pent within a bladder,  
 Or like a human colic, which is sadder.

## LXXV

The shadow came—a tall, thin, grey-hair’d figure,  
 That look’d as it had been a shade on earth ;  
 Quick in its motions, with an air of vigour,  
 But nought to mark its breeding or its birth ;  
 Now it wax’d little, then again grew bigger,  
 With now an air of gloom, or savage mirth ;  
 But as you gazed upon its features, they  
 Changed every instant—to *what*, none could say. 600



## LXXVI

The more intently the ghosts gazed, the less  
 Could they distinguish whose the features were ;  
 The Devil himself seem'd puzzled even to guess ;  
 They varied like a dream—now here, now there ;  
 And several people swore from out the press,  
 They knew him perfectly ; and one could swear  
 He was his father : upon which another  
 Was sure he was his mother's cousin's brother :

## LXXVII

Another, that he was a duke, or knight,  
 An orator, a lawyer, or a priest, 610  
 A nabob, a man-midwife ; but the wight  
 Mysterious changed his countenance at least  
 As oft as they their minds : though in full sight  
 He stood, the puzzle only was increased ;  
 The man was a phantasmagoria in  
 Himself—he was so volatile and thin.

## LXXVIII

The moment that you had pronounced him *one*,  
 Presto ! his face changed, and he was another ;  
 And when that change was hardly well put on,  
 It varied, till I don't think his own mother 620  
 (If that he had a mother) would her son  
 Have known, he shifted so from one to t'other ;  
 Till guessing from a pleasure grew a task,  
 At this epistolary "Iron Mask."

## LXXIX

For sometimes he like Cerberus would seem—  
 "Three gentlemen at once" (as sagely says  
 Good Mrs. Malaprop) ; then you might deem  
 That he was not even *one* ; now many rays  
 Were flashing round him ; and now a thick steam  
 Hid him from sight—like fogs on London days :  
 Now Burke, now Tooke, he grew to people's fancies,  
 And certes often like Sir Philip Francis. 632

## LXXX

I've an hypothesis—'tis quite my own ;  
 I never let it out till now, for fear  
 Of doing people harm about the throne,  
 And injuring some minister or peer,  
 On whom the stigma might perhaps be blown ;  
 It is—my gentle public, lend thine ear !  
 'Tis, that what Junius we are wont to call  
 Was *really, truly*, nobody at all.

640

## LXXXI

I don't see wherefore letters should not be  
 Written without hands, since we daily view  
 Them written without heads ; and books, we see,  
 Are fill'd as well without the latter too :  
 And really till we fix on somebody  
 For certain sure to claim them as his due,  
 Their author, like the Niger's mouth, will bother  
 The world to say if *there* be mouth or author.

## LXXXII

" And who and what art thou ? " the Archangel said.  
 " For *that* you may consult my title-page," 650  
 Replied this mighty shadow of a shade :  
 " If I have kept my secret half an age,  
 I scarce shall tell it now."—" Canst thou upbraid,"  
 Continued Michael, " George Rex, or allege  
 Aught further ? " Junius answer'd, " You had better  
 First ask him for *his* answer to my letter :

## LXXXIII

" My charges upon record will outlast  
 The brass of both his epitaph and tomb."  
 " Repent'st thou not," said Michael, " of some past  
 Exaggeration ? something which may doom 660  
 Thyself if false, as him if true ? Thou wast  
 Too bitter—is it not so ?—in thy gloom  
 Of passion ? "—" Passion ! " cried the phantom dim,  
 " I loved my country, and I hated him.



## LXXXIV

“What I have written, I have written : let  
The rest be on his head or mine ! ” So spoke  
Old “ Nominis Umbra ; ” and while speaking yet,  
Away he melted in celestial smoke.

Then Satan said to Michael, “ Don’t forget 669  
To call George Washington, and John Horne Tooke,  
And Franklin ; ”—but at this time there was heard  
A cry for room, though not a phantom stirr’d.

## LXXXV

At length with jostling, elbowing, and the aid  
Of cherubim appointed to that post,  
The devil Asmodeus to the circle made *the devil in*  
His way, and look’d as if his journey cost *La sag’s*  
Some trouble. When his burden down he laid, *story*  
“ What ’s this ? ” cried Michael ; “ why, ’tis not a  
ghost ? ”

“ I know it,” quoth the incubus ; “ but he  
/ Shall be one, if you leave the affair to me. 680

## LXXXVI

“ Confound the renegado ! I have sprain’d  
My left wing, he’s so heavy ; one would think  
Some of his works about his neck were chain’d.  
But to the point ; while hovering o’er the brink  
Of Skiddaw (where as usual it still rain’d),  
I saw a taper, far below me, wink,  
And stooping, caught this fellow at a libel —  
No less on history than the Holy Bible.

## LXXXVII

“ The former is the devil’s scripture, and  
The latter yours, good Michael : so the affair 690  
Belongs to all of us, you understand.  
I snatch’d him up just as you see him there,  
And brought him off for sentence out of hand :  
I’ve scarcely been ten minutes in the air—  
At least a quarter it can hardly be :  
I dare say that his wife is still at tea.”



## LXXXVIII

Here Satan said, "I know this man of old,  
 And have expected him for some time here;  
 A sillier fellow you will scarce behold,  
 Or more conceited in his petty sphere : 700  
 But surely it was not worth while to fold  
 Such trash below your wing, Asmodeus dear :  
 We had the poor wretch safe (without being bored  
 With carriage) coming of his own accord.

## LXXXIX

"But since he's here, let's see what he has done."  
 "Done!" cried Asmodeus, "he anticipates  
 The very business you are now upon,  
 And scribbles as if head clerk to the Fates.  
 Who knows to what his ribaldry may run, 709  
 When such an ass as this, like Balaam's, prates?"  
 "Let's hear," quoth Michael, "what he has to say :  
 You know we're bound to that in every way."

## XC

Now the bard, glad to get an audience, which /  
 By no means often was his case below,  
 Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and pitch  
 His voice into that awful note of woe  
 To all unhappy hearers within reach  
 Of poets when the tide of rhyme's in flow ;  
 But stuck fast with his first hexameter,  
 Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir. 720

*ceased* XCI

But ere the spayin'd dactyls could be spurr'd  
 Into recitative, in great dismay  
 Both cherubim and seraphim were heard  
 To murmur loudly through their long array ;  
 And Michael rose ere he could get a word  
 Of all his founder'd verses under way,  
 And cried, "For God's sake stop, my friend ! 'twere  
 best—  
*Non Di, non homines*—you know the rest."

## XCII

A general bustle spread throughout the throng,  
 Which seem'd to hold all verse in detestation ; 730  
 The angels had of course enough of song  
 When upon service ; and the generation  
 Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not long  
 Before, to profit by a new occasion :  
 The monarch, mute till then, exclaim'd, " What !  
 what !

*Pye* come again ? No more—no more of that ! "

a poet laureate till 1813

## XCIII

The tumult grew ; an universal cough  
 Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,  
 When Castlereagh has been up long enough  
 (Before he was first minister of state,  
 I mean—the *slaves hear now*) ; some cried " Off, off ! " 740  
 As at a farce ; till, grown quite desperate,  
 The bard Saint Peter pray'd to interpose  
 (Himself an author) only for his prose.

## XCIV

The varlet was not an ill-favour'd knave ;  
 A good deal like a vulture in the face,  
 With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which gave  
 A smart and sharper-looking sort of grace  
 To his whole aspect, which, though rather grave,  
 Was by no means so ugly as his case ; 750  
 But that, indeed, was hopeless as can be,  
 Quite a poetic felony "*de se.*"

## XCV

Then Michael blew his trump, and still'd the noise  
 With one still greater, as is yet the mode  
 On earth besides ; except some grumbling voice,  
 Which now and then will make a slight inroad  
 Upon decorous silence, few will twice  
 Lift up their lungs when fairly overcrow'd ;  
 And now the bard could plead his own bad cause,  
 With all the attitudes of self-applause. 760



## XCVI

He said—(I only give the heads)—he said,  
 He meant no harm in scribbling ; 'twas his way  
 Upon all topics ; 'twas, besides, his bread,  
 Of which he butter'd both sides ; 'twould delay /  
 Too long the assembly (he was pleased to dread),  
 And take up rather more time than a day,  
 To name his works—he would but cite a few—  
 “ Wat Tyler ”—“ Rhymes on Blenheim ”—“ Water-  
 loo.”

## XCVII

He had written praises of a regicide ;  
 He had written praises of all kings whatever ; 770 /  
 He had written for republics far and wide,  
 And then against them bitterer than ever ;  
 For pantisocracy he once had cried  
 Aloud, a scheme less moral than 'twas clever ;  
 Then grew a hearty anti-jacobin—  
 Had turn'd his coat—and would have turn'd his skin.

## XCVIII

He had sung against all battles, and again  
 In their high praise and glory ; he had call'd  
 Reviewing “ the ungentle craft,” and then  
 Become as base a critic as e'er crawl'd— / 780  
 Fed, paid, and pamper'd by the very men  
 By whom his muse and morals had been maul'd :  
 He had written much blank verse, and blanker prose,  
 And more of both than anybody knows.

## XCIX

He had written Wesley's life :—here turning round  
 To Satan, “ Sir, I'm ready to write yours,  
 In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,  
 With notes and preface, all that most allures /  
 The pious purchaser ; and there's no ground  
 For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers : 790  
 So let me have the proper documents,  
 That I may add you to my other saints.”



## C

Satan bow'd, and was silent. "Well, if you,  
 With amiable modesty, decline  
 My offer, what says Michael? There are few  
 Whose memoirs could be render'd more divine.  
 Mine is a pen of all work; not so new  
 As it was once, but I would make you shine  
 Like your own trumpet. By the way, my own  
 Has more of brass in it, and is as well blown.

800

## CI

"But talking about trumpets, here's my Vision!  
 Now you shall judge, all people; yes, you shall  
 Judge with my judgment, and by my decision  
 Be guided who shall enter heaven or fall.  
 I settle all these things by intuition,  
 Times present, past, to come, heaven, hell, and all,  
 Like King Alfonso. When I thus see double,  
 I save the Deity some worlds of trouble."

## CII

He ceased, and drew forth an MS.; and no  
 Persuasion on the part of devils, saints,  
 Or angels, now could stop the torrent; so  
 He read the first three lines of the contents;  
 But at the fourth, the whole spiritual show  
 Had vanish'd, with variety of scents,  
 Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they sprang,  
 Like lightning, off from his "melodious twang."

810

## CIII

Those grand heroics acted as a spell;  
 The angels stopp'd their ears and plied their pinions;  
 The devils ran howling, deafen'd, down to hell;  
 The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their own dominions—  
 (For 'tis not yet decided where they dwell,  
 And I leave every man to his opinions);  
 Michael took refuge in his trump—but, lo!  
 His teeth were set on edge, he could not blow!

821

## CIV

Saint Peter, who has hitherto been known

For an impetuous saint, upraised his keys, *The son of sun,*  
 And at the fifth line knocked the poet down; *attempted to drown his father's sea*

Who fell like Phæton, but more at ease,  
 Into his lake, for there he did not drown;

A different web being by the Destinies *Clotus, 1830*  
 Woven for the Laureate's final wreath, whene'er *La Chesne*  
 Reform shall happen either here or there. *and Atropos*

## CV

*the last holding the scissors*

He first sank to the bottom—like his works,

But soon rose to the surface—like himself;  
 For all corrupted things are buoy'd like corks,

By their own rottenness, light as an elf,  
 Or wisp that flits o'er a morass: he lurks,

It may be, still, like dull books on a shelf,  
 In his own den, to scrawl some "Life" or "Vision,"  
 As Welborn says—"the devil turn'd precisian."

## CVI

As for the rest, to come to the conclusion

841

Of this true dream, the telescope is gone  
 Which kept my optics free from all delusion,

And show'd me what I in my turn have shown;  
 All I saw farther, in the last confusion,

Was, that King George slipp'd into heaven for one;  
 And when the tumult dwindled to a calm,  
 I left him practising the hundredth psalm.

# FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.'

## TO IANTHE

Not in those climes where I have late been straying,  
Though Beauty long hath there been matchless  
deem'd ;

Not in those visions to the heart displaying  
Forms which it sighs but to have only dream'd,  
Hath aught like thee in truth or fancy seem'd :  
Nor, having seen thee, shall I vainly seek  
To paint those charms which varied as they beam'd—  
To such as see thee not my words were weak ;  
To those who gaze on thee what language could they  
speak ?

Ah ! may'st thou ever be what now thou art, 10  
Nor unbeseem the promise of thy spring,  
As fair in form, as warm yet pure in heart,  
Love's image upon earth without his wing,  
And guileless beyond Hope's imagining !  
And surely she who now so fondly rears  
Thy youth, in thee, thus hourly brightening,  
Beholds the rainbow of her future years,  
Before whose heavenly hues all sorrow disappears.

Young Peri of the West !—'tis well for me  
My years already doubly number thine ; 20  
My loveless eye unmoved may gaze on thee,  
And safely view thy ripening beauties shine ;  
Happy, I ne'er shall see them in decline ;  
Happier, that while all younger hearts shall bleed,  
Mine shall escape the doom thine eyes assign  
To those whose admiration shall succeed,  
But mix'd with pangs to Love's even loveliest hours  
decreed.



Oh ! let that eye, which, wild as the Gazelle's,  
 Now brightly bold or beautifully shy,  
 Wins as it wanders, dazzles where it dwells, 30  
 Glance o'er this page, nor to my verse deny  
 That smile for which my breast might vainly sigh  
 Could I to thee be ever more than friend :  
 This much, dear maid, accord ; nor question why  
 To one so young my strain I would commend,  
 But bid me with my wreath one matchless lily blend.

Such is thy name with this my verse entwined ;  
 And long as kinder eyes a look shall cast  
 On Harold's page, Ianthe's here enshrined  
 Shall thus be first beheld, forgotten last : 40  
 My days once number'd, should this homage past  
 Attract thy fairy fingers near the lyre  
 Of him who hail'd thee, loveliest as thou wast,  
 Such is the most my memory may desire ;  
 Though more than Hope can claim, could Friendship  
 less require ?

## CHILDE HAROLD

## FROM CANTO I, i-xi

OH, thou ! in Hellas deem'd of heavenly birth,  
 Muse ! form'd or fabled at the minstrel's will !  
 Since shamed full oft by later lyres on earth,  
 Mine dares not call thee from thy sacred hill :  
 Yet there I've wander'd by thy vaunted rill ;  
 Yes ! sigh'd o'er Delphi's long deserted shrine,  
 Where, save that feeble fountain, all is still ;  
 Nor mote my shell awake the weary Nine  
 To grace so plain a tale—this lowly lay of mine.

Whilome in Albion's isle there dwelt a youth, 10  
 Who ne in virtue's ways did take delight ;  
 But spent his days in riot most uncouth,  
 And vex'd with mirth the drowsy ear of Night.

# 154 FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE'

Ah me ! in sooth he was a shameless wight,  
Sore given to revel and ungodly glee ;  
Few earthly things found favour in his sight  
Save concubines and carnal companie,  
And flaunting wassailers of high and low degree.

Childe Harold was he hight :—but whence his name  
And lineage long, it suits me not to say ;  
Suffice it, that perchance they were of fame, 20  
And had been glorious in another day :  
But one sad losel soils a name for aye,  
However mighty in the olden time ;  
Nor all that heralds rake from coffin'd clay,  
Nor florid prose, nor honeyed lies of rhyme,  
Can blazon evil deeds, or consecrate a crime.

Childe Harold bask'd him in the noontide sun,  
Disporting there like any other fly ;  
Nor deem'd before his little day was done 30  
One blast might chill him into misery.  
But long ere scarce a third of his pass'd by,  
Worse than adversity the Childe befell ;  
He felt the fulness of satiety :  
Then loathed he in his native land to dwell,  
Which seem'd to him more lone than Eremite's sad cell.

For he through Sin's long labyrinth had run,  
Nor made atonement when he did amiss, *Miss Chaworth*  
Had sigh'd to many though he loved but one,  
And that loved one, alas ! could ne'er be his. 40  
Ah, happy she ! to 'scape from him whose kiss  
Had been pollution unto aught so chaste ;  
Who soon had left her charms for vulgar bliss,  
And spoil'd her goodly lands to gild his waste,  
Nor calm domestic peace had ever deign'd to taste.

And now Childe Harold was sore sick at heart,  
And from his fellow bacchanals would flee ;  
'Tis said, at times the sullen tear would start,  
But Pride congeal'd the drop within his ee :



Apart he stalk'd in joyless reverie,  
 And from his native land resolved to go,  
 And visit scorching climes beyond the sea;  
 With pleasure drugg'd, he almost long'd for woe,  
 And e'en for change of scene would seek the shades  
 below.

50

The Childe departed from his father's hall: *Nottingham*  
 It was a vast and venerable pile;  
 So old, it seemed only not to fall,  
 Yet strength was pillar'd in each massy aisle.  
 Monastic dome! condemn'd to uses vile!

*conte* Where Superstition once had made her den *60*  
*san* Now Paphian girls were known to sing and smile;  
 And monks might deem their time was come agen,  
 If ancient tales say true, nor wrong these holy men.

Yet oft-times in his maddest mirthful mood  
 Strange pangs would flash along Childe Harold's  
 brow,  
 As if the memory of some deadly feud  
 Or disappointed passion lurk'd below:  
 But this none knew, nor haply cared to know;  
 For his was not that open, artless soul  
 That feels relief by bidding sorrow flow,  
 Nor sought he friend to counsel or condole,  
 Whate'er this grief mote be, which he could not control.

70

And none did love him: though to hall and bower  
 He gather'd revellers from far and near,  
 He knew them flatt'ers of the festal hour;  
 The heartless parasites of present cheer. *mustre sees*  
 Yea! none did love him—not his lemans dear—  
 But pomp and power alone are woman's care,  
 And where these are light Eros finds a feere; *Consort*  
 Maidens, like moths, are ever caught by glare, *80*  
 And Mammon wins his way where Seraphs might  
 despair.



# 156 FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE'

Childe Harold had a mother—not forgot,  
 Though parting from that mother he did shun ;  
 A sister whom he loved, but saw her not  
 Before his weary pilgrimage begun :  
 If friends he had, he bade adieu to none.  
 Yet deem not thence his breast a breast of steel :  
 Ye, who have known what 'tis to dote upon  
 A few dear objects, will in sadness feel  
 Such partings break the heart they fondly hope to heal.

His house, his home, his heritage, his lands, 91  
 The laughing dames in whom he did delight,  
 Whose large blue eyes, fair locks, and snowy hands,  
 Might shake the saintship of an anchorite,  
 And long had fed his youthful appetite ;  
 His goblets brimm'd with every costly wine,  
 And all that mote to luxury invite,  
 Without a sigh he left, to cross the brine,  
 And traverse Paynim shores, and pass Earth's central  
 line.

*suggested by Lord Maxwell's Good Night in Scott's  
 Border Minstrelsy*  
 CHILDE HAROLD'S DEPARTURE

## 1

ADIEU, adieu ! my native shore  
 Fades o'er the waters blue ;  
 The night-winds sigh, the breakers roar,  
 And shrieks the wild sea-mew.  
 Yon sun that sets upon the sea  
 We follow in his flight ;  
 Farewell awhile to him and thee,  
 My native Land—Good Night !

## 2

A few short hours and he will rise  
 To give the morrow birth ;  
 And I shall hail the main and skies,  
 But not my mother earth.

Deserted is my own good hall,  
Its hearth is desolate ;  
Wild weeds are gathering on the wall ;  
My dog howls at the gate.

## 3

“ Come hither, hither, my little page !  
Why dost thou weep and wail ?  
Or dost thou dread the billows' rage,  
Or tremble at the gale ?  
But dash the tear-drop from thine eye ;  
Our ship is swift and strong :  
Our fleetest falcon scarce can fly  
More merrily along.”

20

## 4

“ Let winds be shrill, let waves roll high,  
I fear not wave nor wind :  
Yet marvel not, Sir Childe, that I  
Am sorrowful in mind ;  
For I have from my father gone,  
A mother whom I love,  
And have no friend, save these alone,  
But thee—and one above.

30

## 5

“ My father bless'd me fervently,  
Yet did not much complain ;  
But sorely will my mother sigh  
Till I come back again. ’—  
“ Enough, enough, my little lad !  
Such tears become thine eye ;  
If I thy guileless bosom had,  
Mine own would not be dry.

40

## 6

“ Come hither, hither, my staunch yeoman,  
Why dost thou look so pale ?  
Or dost thou dread a French foeman ?  
Or shiver at the gale ? ”—

"Deem'st thou I tremble for my life?  
 Sir Childe, I'm not so weak;  
 But thinking on an absent wife  
 Will blanch a faithful cheek.

## 7

"My spouse and boys dwell near thy hall,  
 Along the bordering lake, 50  
 And when they on their father call,  
 What answer shall she make?"—  
 "Enough, enough, my yeoman good,  
 Thy grief let none gainsay; *declare to be*  
 But I, who am of lighter mood, *unreal*  
 Will laugh to flee away."

## 8

For who would trust the seeming sighs  
 Of wife or paramour?  
 Fresh feeres will dry the bright blue eyes  
 We late saw streaming o'er. 60  
 For pleasures past I do not grieve,  
 Nor perils gathering near;  
 My greatest grief is that I leave  
 No thing that claims a tear.

## 9

And now I'm in the world alone,  
 Upon the wide, wide sea:  
 But why should I for others groan,  
 When none will sigh for me?  
 Perchance my dog will whine in vain,  
 Till fed by stranger hands; 70  
 But long ere I come back again  
 He'd tear me where he stands.

## 10

With thee, my bark, I'll swiftly go  
 Athwart the foaming brine;  
 \ Nor care what land thou bear'st me to,  
 So not again to mine.



Welcome, welcome, ye dark-blue waves !  
 And when you fail my sight,  
 Welcome, ye deserts and ye caves !  
 My native Land—Good Night !

8c

PARNASSUS

(CANTO I, lx-lxii.)

OH, thou Parnassus ! whom I now survey,  
 Not in the phrensy of a dreamer's eye,  
 Not in the fabled landscape of a lay,  
 But soaring snow-clad through thy native sky,  
 In the wild pomp of mountain majesty !  
 What marvel if I thus essay to sing ?  
 The humblest of thy pilgrims passing by  
 Would gladly woo thine Echoes with his string,  
 Though from thy heights no more one Muse will wave  
     her wing.

9

Oft have I dream'd of Thee ! whose glorious name  
 Who knows not, knows not man's divinest lore :  
 And now I view thee, 'tis, alas ! with shame  
 That I in feeblest accents must adore.  
 When I recount thy worshippers of yore  
 I tremble, and can only bend the knee ;  
 Nor raise my voice, nor vainly dare to soar,  
 But gaze beneath thy cloudy canopy  
 In silent joy to think at last I look on Thee !

Happier in this than mightiest bards have been,  
 Whose fate to distant homes confined their lot,  
 Shall I unmoved behold the hallow'd scene,  
 Which others rave of, though they know it not ?  
 Though here no more Apollo haunts his grot,  
 And thou, the Muses' seat, art now their grave,  
 Some gentle spirit still pervades the spot,  
 Sighs in the gale, keeps silence in the cave,  
 And glides with glassy foot o'er yon melodious wave

2c

## TO INEZ

## 1

NAY, smile not at my sullen brow ;  
 Alas ! I cannot smile again :  
 Yet Heaven avert that ever thou  
 Shouldst weep, and haply weep in vain.

## 2

And dost thou ask what secret woe  
 I bear, corroding joy and youth ?  
 And wilt thou vainly seek to know  
 A pang, ev'n thou must fail to soothe ?

## 3

It is not love, it is not hate,  
 Nor low Ambition's honours lost,  
 That bids me loathe my present state,  
 And fly from all I prized the most :

10

## 4

It is that weariness which springs  
 From all I meet, or hear, or see :  
 To me no pleasure Beauty brings ;  
 Thine eyes have scarce a charm for me.

## 5

It is that settled, ceaseless gloom  
 The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore ;  
 That will not look beyond the tomb,  
 But cannot hope for rest before.

20

## 6

What Exile from himself can flee ?  
 To zones though more and more remote,  
 Still, still pursues, where'er I be,  
 The blight of life—the demon Thought.

## 7

Yet others rapt in pleasure seem,  
 And taste of all that I forsake ;  
 Oh ! may they still of transport dream,  
 And ne'er, at least like me, awake !

## 8

Through many a clime 'tis mine to go,  
 With many a retrospection curst ; 30  
 And all my solace is to know,  
 Whate'er betides, I've known the worst.

## 9

What is that worst ? Nay, do not ask—  
 In pity from the search forbear :  
 Smile on—nor venture to unmask  
 Man's heart, and view the Hell that 's there.

## IMMORTALITY

(CANTO II, iii-viii)

Son of the morning, rise ! approach you here !  
 Come—but molest not yon defenceless urn :  
 Look on this spot—a nation's sepulchre !  
 Abode of gods, whose shrines no longer burn.  
 Even gods must yield—religions take their turn :  
 'Twas Jove's—'tis Mahomet's—and other creeds  
 Will rise with other years, till man shall learn  
 Vainly his incense soars, his victim bleeds ;  
 Poor child of Doubt and Death, whose hope is built on  
 reeds.

Bound to the earth, he lifts his eye to heaven— 10  
 Is't not enough, unhappy thing ! to know  
 Thou art ? Is this a boon so kindly given,  
 That being, thou wouldst be again, and go,



Thou know'st not, reck'st not, to what region, so  
 On earth no more, but mingled with the skies ?  
 Still wilt thou dream on future joy and woe ?  
 Regard and weigh yon dust before it flies :  
 That little urn saith more than thousand homilies.

Or burst the vanish'd Hero's lofty mound ;  
 Far on the solitary shore he sleeps : 20  
 He fell, and falling nations mourn'd around ;  
 But now not one of saddening thousands weeps,  
 Nor warlike worshipper his vigil keeps  
 Where demi-gods appear'd, as records tell.  
 Remove yon skull from out the scatter'd heaps :  
 Is that a temple where a God may dwell ?  
 Why ev'n the worm at last disdains her shatter'd cell !

Look on its broken arch, its ruin'd wall,  
 Its chambers desolate, and portals foul :  
 Yes, this was once Ambition's airy hall, 30  
 The dome of Thought, the palace of the Soul :  
 Behold through each lack-lustre, eyeless hole,  
 The gay recess of Wisdom and of Wit,  
 And Passion's host, that never brook'd control :  
 Can all saint, sage, or sophist ever writ,  
 People this lonely tower, this tenement refit ?

Well didst thou speak, Athena's wisest son !  
 " All that we know is, nothing can be known."  
 Why should we shrink from what we cannot shun ?  
 Each hath his pang, but feeble sufferers groan 40  
 With brain-born dreams of evil all their own.  
 Pursue what Chance or Fate proclaimeth best ;  
 Peace waits us on the shores of Acheron :  
 There no forced banquet claims the sated guest,  
 But Silence spreads the couch of ever welcome rest.

Yet if, as holiest men have deem'd, there be  
 A land of souls beyond that sable shore,  
 To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee  
 And sophists, madly vain of dubious lore ;

How sweet it were in concert to adore 50  
 With those who made our mortal labours light !  
 To hear each voice we fear'd to hear no more !  
 Behold each mighty shade reveal'd to sight,  
 The Bactrian, Samian sage, and all who taught the right!

## SAPPHO

(CANTO II, xxxix-xli)

Childe Harold sail'd, and pass'd the barren spot,  
 Where sad Penelope o'erlook'd the wave ;  
 And onward view'd the mount, not yet forgot,  
 The lover's refuge, and the Lesbian's grave.  
 Dark Sappho ! could not verse immortal save  
 That breast imbued with such immortal fire ?  
 Could she not live who life eternal gave ?  
 If life eternal may await the lyre,  
 That only Heaven to which Earth's children may aspire.

'Twas on a Grecian autumn's gentle eve 10  
 Childe Harold hail'd Leucadia's cape afar ;  
 A spot he longed to see, nor cared to leave :  
 Oft did he mark the scenes of vanish'd war,  
 Actium, Lepanto, fatal Trafalgar ;  
 Mark them unmoved, for he would not delight  
 (Born beneath some remote inglorious star)  
 In themes of bloody fray, or gallant fight,  
 But loathed the bravo's trade, and laughed at martial  
 wight.

But when he saw the evening star above 20  
 Leucadia's far-projecting rock of woe,  
 And hail'd the last resort of fruitless love,  
 He felt, or deem'd he felt, no common glow :  
 And as the stately vessel glided slow  
 Beneath the shadow of that ancient mount,  
 He watch'd the billows' melancholy flow,  
 And, sunk albeit in thought as he was wont,  
 More placid seem'd his eye, and smooth his pallid front.





## GREECE

(CANTO II, lxxiii-lxxvii, lxxxiv-xciii)

Fair Greece ! sad relic of departed worth !  
 Immortal, though no more ; though fallen, great !  
 Who now shall lead thy scatter'd children forth,  
 And long accustom'd bondage uncreate ?  
 Not such thy sons who whilome did await,  
 The hopeless warriors of a willing doom,  
 In bleak Thermopylæ's sepulchral strait—  
 Oh ! who that gallant spirit shall resume,  
 Leap from Eurotas' banks, and call thee from the  
 tomb ?

Spirit of freedom ! when on Phyle's brow 10  
 Thou sat'st with Thrasybulus and his train,  
 Couldst thou forebode the dismal hour which now  
 Dims the green beauties of thine Attic plain ?  
 Not thirty tyrants now enforce the chain,  
 But every carle can lord it o'er thy land ;  
 Nor rise thy sons, but idly rail in vain,  
 Trembling beneath the scourge of Turkish hand ;  
 From birth till death enslaved ; in word, in deed,  
 unmann'd.

In all save form alone, how changed ! and who  
 That marks the fire still sparkling in each eye, 20  
 Who would but deem their bosoms burn'd anew  
 With thy unquenched beam, lost Liberty !  
 And many dream withal the hour is nigh  
 That gives them back their fathers' heritage :  
 For foreign arms and aid they fondly sigh,  
 Nor solely dare encounter hostile rage,  
 Or tear their name defiled from Slavery's mournful  
 page.



Hereditary bondsmen ! know ye not  
 Who would be free themselves must strike the blow ?  
 By their right arms the conquest must be wrought ?  
 Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye ? no ! 31  
 True, they may lay your proud despoilers low,  
 But not for you will Freedom's altars flame.  
 Shades of the Helots ! triumph o'er your foe !  
 Greece ! change thy lords, thy state is still the same ;  
 Thy glorious day is o'er, but not thy years of shame.

The city won for Allah from the Giaour,  
 The Giaour from Othman's race again may wrest ;  
 And the Serai's impenetrable tower  
 Receive the fiery Frank, her former guest ; 40  
 Or Wahab's rebel brood, who dared divest  
 The prophet's tomb of all its pious spoil,  
 May wind their path of blood along the West ;  
 But ne'er will freedom seek this fated soil,  
 But slave succeed to slave through years of endless toil.

. . . . .  
 When riseth Lacedemon's hardihood,  
 When Thebes Epaminondas rears again,  
 When Athens' children are with hearts endued,  
 When Grecian mothers shall give birth to men,  
 Then may'st thou be restored ; but not till then. 50  
 A thousand years scarce serve to form a state ;  
 An hour may lay it in the dust : and when  
 Can man its shatter'd splendour renovate,  
 Recall its virtues back, and vanquish Time and Fate ?

And yet how lovely in thine age of woe,  
 Land of lost gods and godlike men, art thou !  
 Thy vales of evergreen, thy hills of snow,  
 Proclaim thee Nature's varied favourite now :  
 Thy fanes, thy temples to thy surface bow,  
 Commingling slowly with heroic earth, 60  
 Broke by the share of every rustic plough :  
 So perish monuments of mortal birth,  
 So perish all in turn, save well-recorded Worth ;

166 FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE'

Save where some solitary column mourns  
 Above its prostrate brethren of the cave ;  
 Save where Tritonia's airy shrine adorns  
 Colonna's cliff, and gleams along the wave ;  
 Save o'er some warrior's half-forgotten grave,  
 Where the gray stones and unmolested grass  
 Ages, but not oblivion, feebly brave ; 70  
 While strangers only not regardless pass,  
 Linger like me, perchance, to gaze, and sigh "Alas!"

Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as wild ;  
 Sweet are thy groves, and verdant are thy fields,  
 Thine olive ripe as when Minerva smiled,  
 And still his honey'd wealth Hymettus yields ;  
 There the blithe bee his fragrant fortress builds,  
 The freeborn wanderer of thy mountain-air ;  
 Apollo still thy long, long summer gilds,  
 Still in his beam Mendeli's marbles glare ; 80  
 Art, Glory, Freedom fail, but Nature still is fair.

Where'er we tread 'tis haunted, holy ground ;  
 No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,  
 But one vast realm of wonder spreads around,  
 And all the Muse's tales seem truly told,  
 Till the sense aches with gazing to behold  
 The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon ;  
 Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold  
 Defies the power which crush'd thy temples gone :  
 Age shakes Athena's tower, but spares gray Marathon.

The sun, the soil, but not the slave, the same ; 91  
 Unchanged in all except its foreign lord ;  
 Preserves alike its bounds and boundless fame  
 The Battle-field, where Persia's victim horde  
 First bow'd beneath the brunt of Hellas' sword,  
 As on the morn to distant Glory dear,  
 When Marathon became a magic word ;  
 Which utter'd, to the hearer's eye appear  
 The camp, the host, the fight, the conqueror's career,



The flying Mede, his shaftless broken bow ; 100  
 The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear ;  
 Mountains above, Earth's, Ocean's plain below ;  
 Death in the front, Destruction in the rear !  
 Such was the scene—what now remaineth here ?  
 What sacred trophy marks the hallow'd ground,  
 Recording Freedom's smile and Asia's tear ?  
 The rifled urn, the violated mound,  
 The dust thy courser's hoof, rude stranger ! spurns  
 around.

Yet to the remnants of thy splendour past  
 Shall pilgrims, pensive, but unwearied, throng ; 110  
 Long shall the voyager, with th' Ionian blast,  
 Hail the bright clime of battle and of song ;  
 Long shall thine annals and immortal tongue  
 Fill with thy fame the youth of many a shore ;  
 Boast of the aged ! lesson of the young !  
 Which sages venerate and bards adore,  
 As Pallas and the Muse unveil their awful lore.

The parted bosom clings to wonted home,  
 If aught that's kindred cheer the welcome hearth ;  
 He that is lonely, hither let him roam, 120  
 And gaze complacent on congenial earth.  
 Greece is no lightsome land of social mirth :  
 But he whom Sadness sootheth may abide,  
 And scarce regret the region of his birth,  
 When wandering slow by Delphi's sacred side,  
 Or gazing o'er the plains where Greek and Persian died.

Let such approach this consecrated land,  
 And pass in peace along the magic waste ;  
 But spare its relics—let no busy hand  
 Deface the scenes, already how defaced ! 130  
 Not for such purpose were these altars placed :  
 Revere the remnants nations once revered :  
 So may our country's name be undisgraced,  
 So may'st thou prosper where thy youth was rear'd,  
 By every honest joy of love and life endear'd !



## BEREAVEMENT

(CANTO II, xcviij)

What is the worst of woes that wait on age ?  
 What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow ?  
 To view each loved one blotted from life's page,  
 And be alone on earth, as I am now.  
 Before the Chastener humbly let me bow,  
 O'er hearts divided and o'er hopes destroy'd :  
 Roll on, vain days ! full reckless may ye flow,  
 Since Time hath reft whate'er my soul enjoy'd,  
 And with the ills of Eld mine earlier years alloy'd.

## ON LEAVING ENGLAND

(CANTO III, i, ii)

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child !  
 ADA ! sole daughter of my house and heart ?  
 When last I saw thy young blue eyes they smiled,  
 And then we parted,—not as now we part,  
 But with a hope.—

Awaking with a start,

The waters heave around me ; and on high  
 The winds lift up their voices : I depart,  
 Whither I know not ; but the hour's gone by,  
 When Albion's lessening shores could grieve or glad  
 mine eye.

Once more upon the waters ! yet once more !      10  
 And the waves bound beneath me as a steed  
 That knows his rider. Welcome to their roar !  
 Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead !  
 Though the strain'd mast should quiver as a reed,  
 And the rent canvas fluttering strew the gale,  
 Still must I on ; for I am as a weed,  
 Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam to sail  
 Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath  
 prevail.

## CONSOLATION

(CANTO III, xiii-xv)

Where rose the mountains, there to him were friends ;  
 Where roll'd the ocean, thereon was his home ;  
 Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, extends,  
 He had the passion and the power to roam ;  
 The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,  
 Were unto him companionship ; they spake  
 A mutual language, clearer than the tome  
 Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake  
 For Nature's pages glass'd by sunbeams on the lake.

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars,           10  
 Till he had peopled them with beings bright  
 As their own beams ; and earth, and earth-born jars,  
 And human frailties, were forgotten quite :  
 Could he have kept his spirit to that flight  
 He had been happy ; but this clay will sink  
 Its spark immortal, envying it the light  
 To which it mounts, as if to break the link  
 That keeps us from yon heaven which woos us to its brink.

But in Man's dwellings he became a thing  
 Restless and worn, and stern and wearisome,           20  
 Droop'd as a wild-born falcon with clipt wing,  
 To whom the boundless air alone were home :  
 Then came his fit again, which to o'ercome,  
 As eagerly the barr'd-up bird will beat  
 His breast and beak against his wiry dome  
 Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the heat  
 Of his impeded soul would through his bosom eat.

/ WATERLOO

(CANTO III, xvii, xxi-xxx)

Stop!—for thy tread is on an Empire's dust!  
 An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below!  
 Is the spot mark'd with no colossal bust?  
 Nor column trophied for triumphal show?  
 None; but the moral's truth tells simpler so,  
 As the ground was before, thus let it be;—  
 How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!  
 And is this all the world has gain'd by thee,  
 Thou first and last of fields! king-making Victory?

. . . . .

There was a sound of revelry by night, 10  
 And Belgium's capital had gather'd then  
 Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright  
 The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;  
 A thousand hearts beat happily; and when  
 Music arose with its voluptuous swell,  
 Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,  
 And all went merry as a marriage bell;  
 But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising  
 knell!

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind,  
 Or the car rattling o'er the stony street; 20  
 On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;  
 No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet  
 To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—  
 But hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more,  
 As if the clouds its echo would repeat;  
 And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!  
 Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

Within a window'd niche of that high hall  
 Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear  
 That sound the first amidst the festival, 30  
 And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;



And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,  
 His heart more truly knew that peal too well  
 Which stretch'd his father on a bloody bier,  
 And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell;  
 He rush'd into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

Ah ! then and there was hurrying to and fro,  
 And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,  
 And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago  
 Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness ; 40  
 And there were sudden partings, such as press  
 The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs  
 Which ne'er might be repeated ; who could guess  
 If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,  
 Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise !

And there was mounting in hot haste : the steed,  
 The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,  
 Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,  
 And swiftly forming in the ranks of war ;  
 And the deep thunder peal on peal afar ; 50  
 And near, the beat of the alarming drum  
 Roused up the soldier ere the morning star ;  
 While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,  
 Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe ! they  
 come ! they come !"

And wild and high the "Cameron's gathering" rose !  
 The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills  
 Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes :—  
 How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,  
 Savage and shrill ! But with the breath which fills  
 Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers 60  
 With the fierce native daring which instils  
 The stirring memory of a thousand years,  
 And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears !

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,  
 Dowy with nature's tear-drops as they pass,  
 Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,  
 Over the unreturning brave,—alas !  
 Ere evening to be trodden like the grass

# 172 FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE'

Which now beneath them, but above shall grow  
 In its next verdure, when this fiery mass 70  
 Of living valour, rolling on the foe  
 And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and  
 low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,  
 Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,  
 The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,  
 The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day  
 Battle's magnificently stern array!  
 The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent  
 The earth is cover'd thick with other clay, 79  
 Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,  
 Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent!

Their praise is hymn'd by loftier harps than mine:  
 Yet one I would select from that proud throng,  
 Partly because they blend me with his line,  
 And partly that I did his sire some wrong,  
 And partly that bright names will hallow song;  
 And his was of the bravest, and when shower'd  
 The death-bolts deadliest the thinn'd files along,  
 Even where the thickest of war's tempest lower'd,  
 They reach'd no nobler breast than thine, young gallant  
 Howard! 90

There have been tears and breaking hearts for thee,  
 And mine were nothing had I such to give;  
 But when I stood beneath the fresh green tree,  
 Which living waves where thou didst cease to live,  
 And saw around me the wide field revive  
 With fruits and fertile promise, and the Spring  
 Come forth her work of gladness to contrive,  
 With all her reckless birds upon the wing,  
 I turn'd from all she brought to those she could not  
 bring.



## NAPOLEON

(CANTO III, xxxvi-xliv)

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of men,  
 Whose spirit, antithetically mixt,  
 One moment of the mightiest, and again  
 On little objects with like firmness fixt;  
 Extreme in all things! hadst thou been betwixt,  
 Thy throne had still been thine, or never been;  
 For daring made thy rise as fall: thou seek'st  
 Even now to re-assume the imperial mien,  
 And shake again the world, the Thunderer of the  
 scene!

Conqueror and captive of the earth art thou! 10  
 She trembles at thee still, and thy wild name  
 Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds than now  
 That thou art nothing, save the jest of Fame,  
 Who woo'd thee once, thy vassal, and became  
 The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou wert  
 A god unto thyself; nor less the same  
 To the astounded kingdoms all inert,  
 Who deem'd thee for a time whate'er thou didst assert.

Oh, more or less than man—in high or low,  
 Battling with nations, flying from the field; 20  
 Now making monarchs' necks thy footstool, now  
 More than thy meanest soldier taught to yield;  
 An empire thou couldst crush, command, rebuild,  
 But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,  
 However deeply in men's spirits skill'd,  
 Look through thine own, nor curb the lust of war,  
 Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the loftiest star.

Yet well thy soul hath brook'd the turning tide  
 With that untaught innate philosophy,  
 Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep pride, 30  
 Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.  
 When the whole host of hatred stood hard by,



174 FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE'

To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou hast smiled  
 With a sedate and all-enduring eye ;—  
 When Fortune fled her spoil'd and favourite child,  
 He stood unbow'd beneath the ills upon him piled.

Sager than in thy fortunes ; for in them  
 Ambition steel'd thee on too far to show  
 That just habitual scorn, which could contemn  
 Men and their thoughts ; t'was wise to feel, not so  
 To wear it ever on thy lip and brow, 41  
 And spurn the instruments thou wert to use  
 Till they were turn'd unto thine overthrow :  
 'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose ;  
 So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot who choose.

If, like a tower upon a headland rock,  
 Thou hadst been made to stand or fall alone,  
 Such scorn of man had help'd to brave the shock ;  
 But men's thoughts were the steps which paved thy  
 throne,  
 Their admiration thy best weapon shone ; 50  
 The part of Philip's son was thine, not then  
 (Unless aside thy purple had been thrown)  
 Like stern Diogenes to mock at men ;  
 For sceptred cynics earth were far too wide a den.

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,  
 And *there* hath been thy bane ; there is a fire  
 And motion of the soul which will not dwell  
 In its own narrow being, but aspire  
 Beyond the fitting medium of desire ,  
 And, but once kindled, quenchless evermore, 60  
 Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire  
 Of aught but rest ; a fever at the core,  
 Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

This makes the madmen who have made men mad  
 By their contagion ; Conquerors and Kings,  
 Founders of sects and systems, to whom add  
 Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet things

Which stir too strongly the soul's secret springs,  
 And are themselves the fools to those they fool ;  
 Envied, yet how unenviable ! what stings 70  
 Are theirs ! One breast laid open were a school  
 Which would unteach mankind the lust to shine or rule :

Their breath is agitation, and their life  
 A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last,  
 And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife,  
 That should their days, surviving perils past,  
 Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast  
 With sorrow and supineness, and so die ;  
 Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste  
 With its own flickering, or a sword laid by, 80  
 Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

## THE DRACHENFELS

### 1

The castled crag of Drachenfels  
 Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,  
 Whose breast of waters broadly swells  
 Between the banks which bear the vine,  
 And hills all rich with blossom'd trees,  
 And fields which promise corn and wine,  
 And scatter'd cities crowning these,  
 Whose far white walls along them shine,  
 Have strew'd a scene, which I should see  
 With double joy wert *thou* with me. 10

### 2

And peasant girls, with deep blue eyes,  
 And hands which offer early flowers,  
 Walk smiling o'er this paradise ;  
 Above, the frequent feudal towers  
 Through green leaves lift their walls of gray ;  
 And many a rock which steeply lowers,  
 And noble arch in proud decay,  
 Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers ;  
 But one thing want these banks of Rhine,—  
 Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine ! 20



## 3

I send the lilies given to me ;  
 Though long before thy hand they touch,  
 I know that they must wither'd be,  
 But yet reject them not as such ;  
 For I have cherish'd them as dear,  
 Because they yet may meet thine eye,  
 And guide thy soul to mine even here,  
 When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,  
 And know'st them gather'd by the Rhine,  
 And offer'd from my heart to thine !

30

## 4

The river nobly foams and flows,  
 The charm of this enchanted ground,  
 And all its thousand turns disclose  
 Some fresher beauty varying round :  
 The haughtiest breast its wish might bound  
 Through life to dwell delighted here ;  
 Nor could on earth a spot be found  
 To nature and to me so dear,  
 Could thy dear eyes in following mine  
 Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine !

40

## ✓ NATURE THE CONSOLER

(CANTO III, lxviii-lxxv)

Lake Lemman woos me with its crystal face,  
 The mirror where the stars and mountains view  
 The stillness of their aspect in each trace  
 Its clear depth yields of their far height and hue :  
 There is too much of man here, to look through  
 With a fit mind the might which I behold ;  
 But soon in me shall Loneliness renew  
 Thoughts hid, but not less cherish'd than of old,  
 Ere mingling with the herd had penn'd me in their  
 fold.



To fly from, need not be to hate, mankind :  
 All are not fit with them to stir and toil,  
 Nor is it discontent to keep the mind  
 Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil  
 In the hot throng, where we become the spoil  
 Of our infection, till too late and long  
 We may deplore and struggle with the coil,  
 In wretched interchange of wrong for wrong  
 Midst a contentious world, striving where none are  
 strong.

There, in a moment we may plunge our years  
 In fatal penitence, and in the blight  
 Of our own soul turn all our blood to tears,  
 And colour things to come with hues of Night ;  
 The race of life becomes a hopeless flight  
 To those that walk in darkness : on the sea  
 The boldest steer but where their ports invite ;  
 But there are wanderers o'er Eternity  
 Whose bark drives on and on, and anchor'd ne'er  
 shall be.

Is it not better, then, to be alone,  
 And love Earth only for its earthly sake ?  
 By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,  
 Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,  
 Which feeds it as a mother who doth make  
 A fair but froward infant her own care,  
 Kissing its cries away as these awake ;—  
 Is it not better thus our lives to wear,  
 Than join the crushing crowd, doom'd to inflict or  
 bear ?

I live not in myself, but I become  
 Portion of that around me ; and to me  
 High mountains are a feeling, but the hum  
 Of human cities torture : I can see

178 FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE'

Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be  
 A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,  
 Class'd among creatures, when the soul can flee,  
 And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain  
 Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in vain.

And thus I am absorb'd, and this is life :  
 I look upon the peopled desert past,  
 As on a place of agony and strife,  
 Where, for some sin, to Sorrow I was cast,  
 To act and suffer, but remount at last 50  
 With a fresh pinion ; which I feel to spring,  
 Though young, yet waxing vigorous as the blast  
 Which it would cope with, on delighted wing,  
 Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round our being  
 cling.

And when, at length, the mind shall be all free  
 From what it hates in this degraded form,  
 Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be  
 Existent happier in the fly and worm,—  
 When elements to elements conform,  
 And dust is as it should be, shall I not 60  
 Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm ?  
 The bodiless thought ? the Spirit of each spot ?  
 Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot ?

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part  
 Of me and of my soul, as I of them ?  
 Is not the love of these deep in my heart  
 With a pure passion ? should I not condemn  
 All objects, if compared with these ? and stem  
 A tide of suffering, rather than forego  
 Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm 70  
 Of those whose eyes are only turn'd below,  
 Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not  
 glow ?

## LAKE OF GENEVA

(CANTO III, lxxxv-lxxxvii, xcii-xcvii)

Clear, placid Lemman ! thy contrasted lake,  
 With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing  
 Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake  
 Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.  
 This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing  
 To waft me from distraction ; once I loved  
 Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring  
 Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice reproved,  
 That I with stern delights should e'er have been so  
 moved.

It is the hush of night, and all between 10  
 Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,  
 Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,  
 Save darken'd Jura, whose cap't heights appear  
 Precipitously steep ; and drawing near,  
 There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,  
 Of flowers yet fresh with childhood ; on the ear  
 Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,  
 Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more ;

He is an evening reveller, who makes  
 His life an infancy, and sings his fill ; 20  
 At intervals, some bird from out the brakes  
 Starts into voice a moment, then is still.  
 There seems a floating whisper on the hill,  
 But that is fancy, for the starlight dews  
 All silently their tears of love instil,  
 Weeping themselves away, till they infuse  
 Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

The sky is changed !—and such a change ! Oh night,  
 And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,  
 Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light 30  
 Of a dark eye in woman ! Far along,



180 FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE'

From peak to peak, the rattling crags among  
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,  
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,  
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,  
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

And this is in the night:—Most glorious night!  
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be  
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—  
A portion of the tempest and of thee! 40  
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,  
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!  
And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee  
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,  
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between  
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted  
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,  
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted;  
Though in their souls, which thus each other  
thwarted, 50  
Love was the very root of the fond rage  
Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed:  
Itself expired, but leaving them an age  
Of years all winters,—war within themselves to wage.

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his  
way,  
The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand:  
For here, not one, but many, make their play,  
And fling their thunder-bolts from hand to hand,  
Flashing and cast around: of all the band,  
The brightest through these parted hills hath fork'd  
His lightnings,—as if he did understand, 61  
That in such gaps as desolation work'd,  
There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein  
lurk'd.

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings ! ye !  
 With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul  
 To make these felt and feeling, well may be  
 Things that have made me watchful ; the far roll  
 Of your departing voices, is the knoll  
 Of what in me is sleepless,—if I rest.  
 But where of ye, O tempests ! is the goal ? 70  
 Are ye like those within the human breast ?  
 Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high  
 nest ?

Could I embody and unbosom now  
 That which is most within me,—could I wreak  
 My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw  
 Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,  
 All that I would have sought, and all I seek,  
 Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe—into *one* word,  
 And that one word were Lightning, I would speak ;  
 But as it is, I live and die unheard, 80  
 With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.

## CLARENS

(CANTO III, xcix–civ)

Clarens ! sweet Clarens, birthplace of deep Love !  
 Thine air is the young breath of passionate thought ;  
 Thy trees take root in Love ; the snows above  
 The very Glaciers have his colours caught,  
 And sun-set into rose-hues sees them wrought  
 By rays which sleep there lovingly : the rocks,  
 The permanent crags, tell here of Love, who sought  
 In them a refuge from the worldly shocks,  
 Which stir and sting the soul with hope that woos,  
 then mocks.

Clarens ! by heavenly feet thy paths are trod,— 10  
 Undying Love's, who here ascends a throne  
 To which the steps are mountains ; where the god  
 Is a pervading life and light,—so shown



182 FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE'

Not on those summits solely, nor alone  
In the still cave and forest ; o'er the flower  
His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath blown,  
His soft and summer breath, whose tender power  
Passes the strength of storms in their most desolate  
hour.

All things are here of *him* ; from the black pines,  
Which are his shade on high, and the loud roar 20  
Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the vines  
Which slope his green path downward to the shore,  
Where the bow'd waters meet him, and adore,  
Kissing his feet with murmurs ; and the wood,  
The covert of old trees, with trunks all hoar,  
But light leaves, young as joy, stands where it stood,  
Offering to him, and his, a populous solitude.

A populous solitude of bees and birds,  
And fairy-form'd and many-colour'd things,  
Who worship him with notes more sweet than words,  
And innocently open their glad wings, 31  
Fearless and full of life : the gush of springs,  
And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend  
Of stirring branches, and the bud which brings  
The swiftest thought of beauty, here extend,  
Mingling, and made by Love, unto one mighty end.

He who hath loved not, here would learn that lore,  
And make his heart a spirit ; he who knows  
That tender mystery, will love the more ;  
For this is Love's recess, where vain men's woes, 40  
And the world's waste, have driven him far from  
those,  
For 'tis his nature to advance or die ;  
He stands not still, but or decays, or grows  
Into a boundless blessing, which may vie  
With the immortal lights, in its eternity !



'Twas not for fiction chose Rousseau this spot,  
 Peopling it with affections ; but he found  
 It was the scene which Passion must allot  
 To the mind's purified beings ; 'twas the ground  
 Where early Love his Psyche's zone unbound, 50  
 And hallow'd it with loveliness : 'tis lone,  
 And wonderful, and deep, and hath a sound,  
 And sense, and sight of sweetness ; here the Rhone  
 Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps have reared  
 a throne.

## GIBBON AND VOLTAIRE

(CANTO III, cv-cviii)

Lausanne ! and Ferney ! ye have been the abodes  
 Of names which unto you bequeath'd a name ;  
 Mortals, who sought and found, by dangerous roads,  
 A path to perpetuity of fame :  
 They were gigantic minds, and their steep aim  
 Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile  
 Thoughts which should call down thunder, and the  
 flame  
 Of Heaven again assail'd, if Heaven the while  
 On man and man's research could deign do more than  
 smile.

The one was fire and fickleness, a child 10  
 Most mutable in wishes, but in mind  
 A wit as various,—gay, grave, sage, or wild,—  
 Historian, bard, philosopher, combined ;  
 He multiplied himself among mankind,  
 The Proteus of their talents : But his own  
 Breathed most in ridicule,—which, as the wind,  
 Blew where it listed, laying all things prone,—  
 Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake a throne

184 FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE'

The other, deep and slow, exhausting thought,  
 And hiving wisdom with each studious year, 20  
 In meditation dwelt, with learning wrought,  
 And shaped his weapon with an edge severe,  
 Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer ;  
 The lord of irony,—that master-spell,  
 Which stung his foes to wrath, which grew from fear,  
 And doom'd him to the zealot's ready Hell,  
 Which answers to all doubts so eloquently well.

Yet, peace be with their ashes,—for by them,  
 If merited, the penalty is paid ;  
 It is not ours to judge,—far less condemn ; 30  
 The hour must come when such things shall be made  
 Known unto all,—or hope and dread allay'd  
 By slumber, on one pillow, in the dust,  
 Which, thus much we are sure, must lie decay'd ;  
 And when it shall revive, as is our trust,  
 'Twill be to be forgiven, or suffer what is just.

I HAVE NOT LOVED THE WORLD

(CANTO III, cxiii, cxiv)

I have not loved the world, nor the world me ;  
 I have not flatter'd its rank breath, nor bow'd  
 To its idolatries a patient knee,  
 Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles,—nor cried aloud  
 In worship of an echo ; in the crowd  
 They could not deem me one of such ; I stood  
 Among them, but not of them ; in a shroud  
 Of thoughts which were not their thoughts, and still  
 could,  
 Had I not filed my mind, which thus itself subdued.

I have not loved the world, nor the world me,— 10  
 But let us part fair foes ; I do believe,  
 Though I have found them not, that there may be  
 Words which are things,— hopes which will not  
 deceive,



And virtues which are merciful, nor weave  
 Snares for the failing ; I would also deem  
 O'er others' griefs that some sincerely grieve ;  
 That two, or one, are almost what they seem,—  
 That goodness is no name, and happiness no dream.

VENICE

(CANTO IV, i-iv, xi-xviii)

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs ;  
 A palace and a prison on each hand :  
 I saw from out the wave her structures rise  
 As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand :  
 A thousand years their cloudy wings expand  
 Around me, and a dying Glory smiles  
 O'er the far times, when many a subject land  
 Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,  
 Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles !

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean, 10  
 Rising with her tiara of proud towers  
 At airy distance, with majestic motion,  
 A ruler of the waters and their powers :  
 And such she was ;—her daughters had their dowers  
 From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East  
 Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.  
 In purple was she robed, and of her feast  
 Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity increased.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more, 20  
 And silent rows the songless gondolier ;  
 Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,  
 And music meets not always now the ear :  
 Those days are gone—but Beauty still is here.  
 States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth not die,  
 Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,  
 The pleasant place of all festivity,  
 The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy !





186 FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE'

But unto us she hath a spell beyond  
 Her name in story, and her long array  
 Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond 30  
 Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway ;  
 Ours is a trophy which will not decay  
 With the Rialto ; Shylock and the Moor,  
 And Pierre, can not be swept or worn away—  
 The keystones of the arch ! though all were o'er,  
 For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord ;  
 And, annual marriage now no more renew'd,  
 The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,  
 Neglected garment of her widowhood ! 40  
 St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood  
 Stand, but in mockery of his wither'd power,  
 Over the proud Place where an Emperor sued,  
 And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour  
 When Venice was a queen with an unequall'd dower.

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns—  
 An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt ;  
 Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains  
 Clank over sceptred cities ; nations melt  
 From power's high pinnacle, when they have felt  
 The sunshine for a while, and downward go 51  
 Like lauwine loosen'd from the mountain's belt ;  
 Oh for one hour of blind old Dandolo !  
 Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe.

Before St. Mark still glow his steeds of brass,  
 Their gilded collars glittering in the sun ;  
 But is not Doria's menace come to pass ?  
 Are they not *bridled* ?—Venice, lost and won,  
 Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,  
 Sinks, like a sea-weed, into whence she rose ! 60  
 Better be whelm'd beneath the waves, and shun,  
 Even in destruction's depth, her foreign foes,  
 From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

And the crush'd relics of their vanish'd might.  
 The Roman saw these tombs in his own age,  
 These sepulchres of cities, which excite  
 Sad wonder, and his yet surviving page  
 The moral lesson bears, drawn from such pilgrimage.

That page is now before me, and on mine  
*His* country's ruin added to the mass  
 Of perish'd states he mourn'd in their decline,  
 And I in desolation : all that *was* 40  
 Of then destruction is ; and now, alas !  
 Rome—Rome imperial, bows her to the storm,  
 In the same dust and blackness, and we pass  
 The skeleton of her Titanic form,  
 Wrecks of another world, whose ashes still are warm.

Yet, Italy ! through every other land  
 Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side to side ;  
 Mother of Arts ! as once of arms : thy hand  
 Was then our guardian, and is still our guide ;  
 Parent of our Religion ! whom the wide 50  
 Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven !  
 Europe, repentant of her parricide,  
 Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward driven,  
 Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be forgiven.

## CLITUMNUS

(CANTO IV, lxvi, lxvii)

But thou, Clitumnus ! in thy sweetest wave  
 Of the most living crystal that was e'er  
 The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave  
 Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear  
 Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer  
 Grazes ; the purest god of gentle waters !  
 And most serene of aspect, and most clear ;  
 Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters,  
 A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters !



192 FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE'

And on thy happy shore a Temple still, 10  
 Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,  
 Upon a mild declivity of hill,  
 Its memory of thee ; beneath it sweeps  
 Thy current's calmness ; oft from out it leaps  
 The finny darter with the glittering scales,  
 Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps ;  
 While, chance, some scatter'd water-lily sails  
 Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling  
 tales.

TERNI

(CANTO IV, lxix-lxxii)

The roar of waters !—from the headlong height  
 Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice ;  
 The fall of waters ! rapid as the light  
 The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss ;  
 The hell of waters ! where they howl and hiss,  
 And boil in endless torture ; while the sweat  
 Of their great agony, wrung out from this  
 Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet  
 That guard the gulf around, in pitiless horror set.

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again  
 Returns in an unceasing shower, which round, 11  
 With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,  
 Is an eternal April to the ground,  
 Making it all one emerald :—how profound  
 The gulf ! and how the giant element  
 From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,  
 Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent  
 With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful  
 vent

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows  
 More like the fountain of an infant sea 20  
 Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes  
 Of a new world, than only thus to be



Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,  
 With many windings, through the vale:—Look back!  
 Lo! where it comes like an eternity,  
 As if to sweep down all things in its track,  
 Charming the eye with dread,—a matchless cataract,

Horribly beautiful! but on the verge,  
 From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,  
 An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge, 30  
 Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn  
 Its steady dyes, while all around is torn  
 By the distracted waters, bears serene  
 Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn:  
 Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,  
 Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

## THE APENNINES, AND HORACE

(CANTO IV, lxxiii–lxxvii)

ONCE more upon the woody Apennine,  
 The infant Alps, which—had I not before  
 Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine  
 Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar  
 The thundering lauwine—might be worshipp'd more;  
 But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear  
 Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar  
 Glaciers of bleak Mont Blanc both far and near,  
 And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of fear,

Th' Acroceraunian mountains of old name; 10  
 And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly  
 Like spirits of the spot, as 'twere for fame,  
 For still they soared unutterably high:  
 I've look'd on Ida with a Trojan's eye;  
 Athos, Olympus, Aetna, Atlas, made  
 These hills seem things of lesser dignity,  
 All, save the lone Soracte's height, display'd  
 Not now in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's aid

For our remembrance, and from out the plain  
 Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break, 20  
 And on the curl hangs pausing : not in vain  
 May he, who will, his recollections rake,  
 And quote in classic raptures, and awake  
 The hills with Latian echoes ; I abhorr'd  
 Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,  
 The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by word  
 In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record

Aught that recalls the daily drug which turn'd  
 My sickening memory ; and, though Time hath  
     taught  
 My mind to meditate what then it learn'd, 30  
 Yet such the fix'd inveteracy wrought  
 By the impatience of my early thought,  
 That, with the freshness wearing out before  
 My mind could relish what it might have sought,  
 If free to choose, I cannot now restore  
 Its health ; but what it then detested, still abhor.

Then farewell, Horace ; whom I hated so,  
 Not for thy faults, but mine ; it is a curse  
 To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,  
 To comprehend, but never love thy verse : 40  
 Although no deeper Moralist rehearse  
 Our little life, nor Bard prescribe his art,  
 Nor livelier Satirist the conscience pierce,  
 Awakening without wounding the touch'd heart,  
 Yet fare thee well—upon Soracte's ridge we part.

✓  
ROME

(CANTO IV, lxxviii-lxxxii, cvii-cx)

OH Rome ! my country ! city of the soul !  
 The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,  
 Lone mother of dead empires ! and control  
 In their shut breasts their petty misery.  
 What are our woes and sufferance ? Come and see  
 The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way  
 O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye !  
 Whose agonies are evils of a day—  
 A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

The Niobe of nations ! there she stands, 10  
 Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe ;  
 An empty urn within her wither'd hands,  
 Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago ;  
 The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now ;  
 The very sepulchres lie tenantless  
 Of their heroic dwellers : dost thou flow,  
 Old Tiber ! through a marble wilderness ?  
 Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood, and Fire,  
 Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride ; 20  
 She saw her glories star by star expire,  
 And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,  
 Where the car climb'd the Capitol ; far and wide  
 Temple and tower went down, nor left a site :  
 Chaos of ruins ! who shall trace the void,  
 O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,  
 And say, ' here was, or is,' where all is doubly night ?

The double night of ages, and of her,  
 Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt and wrap  
 All round us ; we but feel our way to err : 30  
 The ocean hath its chart, the stars their map,



And Knowledge spreads them on her ample lap ;  
 But Rome is as the desert, where we steer  
 Stumbling o'er recollections ; now we clap  
 Our hands, and cry 'Eureka !' it is clear—  
 When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

Alas ! the lofty city ! and alas !  
 The trebly hundred triumphs ! and the day  
 When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass  
 The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away ! 40  
 Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,  
 And Livy's pictured page !—but these shall be  
 Her resurrection ; all beside—decay.  
 Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see  
 That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was  
 free !

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Cypress and ivy, weed and wallflower grown  
 Matted and mass'd together, hillocks heap'd  
 On what were chambers, arch crush'd, column strown  
 In fragments, choked up vaults, and frescos steep'd  
 In subterranean damps, where the owl peep'd, 50  
 Deeming it midnight :—Temples, baths, or halls ?  
 Pronounce who can ; for all that Learning reap'd  
 From her research hath been, that these are walls—  
 Behold the Imperial Mount ! 'tis thus the mighty falls.

There is the moral of all human tales ;  
 'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,  
 First Freedom, and then Glory—when that fails,  
 Wealth, vice, corruption,—barbarism at last.  
 And History, with all her volumes vast,  
 Hath but *one* page,—'tis better written here 60  
 Where gorgeous Tyranny hath thus amass'd  
 All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear,  
 Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask—Away with words !  
 draw near,

Admire, exult, despise, laugh, weep,—for here  
 There is such matter for all feeling :—Man !  
 Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear,  
 Ages and realms are crowded in this span,  
 This mountain, whose obliterated plan  
 The pyramid of empires pinnacled,  
 Of Glory's gewgaws shining in the van 70  
 Till the sun's rays with added flame were fill'd !  
 Where are its golden roofs ? where those who dared  
 to build ?

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,  
 Thou nameless column with the buried base !  
 What are the laurels of the Caesar's brow ?  
 Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-place.  
 Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,  
 Titus or Trajan's ? No—'tis that of Time :  
 Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace  
 Scoffing ; and apostolic statues climb 80  
 To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept sublime.

## ✓ FREEDOM

(CANTO IV, xcvi–xcviii)

CAN tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,  
 And Freedom find no champion and no child  
 Such as Columbia saw arise when she  
 Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and undefiled ?  
 Or must such minds be nourish'd in the wild,  
 Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar  
 Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled  
 On infant Washington ? Has Earth no more  
 Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such shore ?

But France got drunk with blood to vomit crime,  
 And fatal have her Saturnalia been 11  
 To Freedom's cause, in every age and clime ;  
 Because the deadly days which we have seen,



And vile Ambition, that built up between  
 Man and his hopes an adamantine wall,  
 And the base pageant last upon the scene,  
 Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall  
 Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst—his  
 second fall.

Yet, Freedom ! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,  
 Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind ; 20  
 Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,  
 The loudest still the tempest leaves behind ;  
 Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,  
 Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and little worth,  
 But the sap lasts,—and still the seed we find  
 Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North ;  
 So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

## TOMB OF CECILIA METELLA

(CANTO IV, xcix—ciii)

THERE is a stern round tower of other days,  
 Firm as a fortress, with its fence of stone,  
 Such as an army's baffled strength delays,  
 Standing with half its battlements alone,  
 And with two thousand years of ivy grown,  
 The garland of eternity, where wave  
 The green leaves over all by time o'erthrown ;—  
 What was this tower of strength ? within its cave  
 What treasure lay so lock'd, so hid ?—A woman's  
 grave.

But who was she, the lady of the dead, 10  
 Tomb'd in a palace ? Was she chaste and fair ?  
 Worthy a king's, or more—a Roman's bed ?  
 What race of chiefs and heroes did she bear ?



What daughter of her beauties was the heir ?  
How lived, how loved, how died she ? Was she not  
So honoured—and conspicuously there,  
Where meaner relics must not dare to rot,  
Placed to commemorate a more than mortal lot ?

Was she as those who love their lords, or they  
Who love the lords of others ? such have been 20  
Even in the olden time, Rome's annals say.  
Was she a matron of Cornelia's mien,  
Or the light air of Egypt's graceful queen,  
Profuse of joy—or 'gainst it did she war  
Inveterate in virtue ? Did she lean  
To the soft side of the heart, or wisely bar  
Love from amongst her griefs ?—for such the affections  
are.

Perchance she died in youth : it may be, bow'd  
With woes far heavier than the ponderous tomb  
That weigh'd upon her gentle dust, a cloud 30  
Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom  
In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom  
Heaven gives its favourites—early death ; yet shed  
A sunset charm around her, and illumine  
With hectic light, the Hesperus of the dead,  
Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like red.

Perchance she died in age—surviving all,  
Charms, kindred, children—with the silver gray  
On her long tresses, which might yet recall,  
It may be, still a something of the day 40  
When they were braided, and her proud array  
And lovely form were envied, praised, and eyed  
By Rome—But whither would Conjecture stray ?  
Thus much alone we know—Metella died,  
The wealthiest Roman's wife : Behold his love or pride

## GROTTO OF EGERIA

(CANTO IV, cxv-cxxvii)

EGERIA ! sweet creation of some heart  
 Which found no mortal resting-place so fair  
 As thine ideal breast ; whate'er thou art  
 Or wert,—a young Aurora of the air,  
 The nympholepsy of some fond despair ;  
 Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,  
 Who found a more than common votary there  
 Too much adoring ; whatsoe'er thy birth,  
 Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied forth.

The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled 10  
 With thine Elysian water-drops ; the face  
 Of thy cave-guarded spring with years unwrinkled,  
 Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,  
 Whose green, wild margin now no more erase  
 Art's works ; nor must the delicate waters sleep,  
 Prison'd in marble, bubbling from the base  
 Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap  
 The rill runs o'er, and round fern, flowers, and ivy creep,

Fantastically tangled : the green hills  
 Are clothed with early blossoms, through the grass  
 The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills 21  
 Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye pass ;  
 Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,  
 Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes,  
 Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass ;  
 The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,  
 Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems colour'd by its  
 skies.

Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,  
 Egeria ! thy all heavenly bosom beating  
 For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover ; 30  
 The purple Midnight veil'd that mystic meeting



With her most starry canopy, and seating  
Thyself by thine adorer, what befell ?  
This cave was surely shaped out for the greeting  
Of an enamour'd Goddess, and the cell  
Haunted by holy Love—the earliest oracle !

And didst thou not, thy breast to his replying,  
Blend a celestial with a human heart ;  
And Love, which dies as it was born, in sighing,  
Share with immortal transports ? could thine art  
Make them indeed immortal, and impart 41  
The purity of heaven to earthly joys,  
Expel the venom and not blunt the dart—  
The dull satiety which all destroys—  
And root from out the soul the deadly weed which cloy's ?

Alas ! our young affections run to waste,  
Or water but the desert ; whence arise  
But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of haste,  
Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes,  
Flowers whose wild odours breathe but agonies, 50  
And trees whose gums are poisons ; such the plants  
Which spring beneath her steps as Passion flies  
O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants  
For some celestial fruit forbidden to our wants.

Oh Love ! no habitant of earth thou art—  
An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,—  
A faith whose martyrs are the broken heart,—  
But never yet hath seen, nor e'er shall see  
The naked eye, thy form, as it should be ;  
The mind hath made thee, as it peopled heaven, 60  
Even with its own desiring phantasy,  
And to a thought such shape and image given,  
As haunts the unquench'd soul—parch'd, wearied,  
          wrung, and riven.

Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,  
And fevers into false creation :—where,  
Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath seiz'd ?  
In him alone. Can Nature show so fair ?



202 FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE'

Where are the charms and virtues which we dare  
 Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men,  
 The unreach'd Paradise of our despair, 70  
 Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,  
 And overpowers the page where it would bloom again ?

Who loves, raves—'tis youth's frenzy—but the cure  
 Is bitterer still, as charm by charm unwinds  
 Which robed our idols, and we see too sure  
 Nor worth nor beauty dwells from out the mind's  
 Ideal shape of such ; yet still it binds  
 The fatal spell, and still it draws us on,  
 Reaping the whirlwind from the oft-sown winds ;  
 The stubborn heart, its alchemy begun, 80  
 Seems ever near the prize—wealthiest when most undone.

We wither from our youth, we gasp away—  
 Sick—sick ; unfound the boon, unslaked the thirst,  
 Though to the last, in verge of our decay,  
 Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first—  
 But all too late,—so are we doubly curst.  
 Love, fame, ambition, avarice—'tis the same,  
 Each idle, and all ill, and none the worst—  
 For all are meteors with a different name, 89  
 And Death the sable smoke where vanishes the flame.

Few—none—find what they love or could have loved,  
 Though accident, blind contact, and the strong  
 Necessity of loving, have removed  
 Antipathies—but to recur, ere long,  
 Envenom'd with irrevocable wrong ;  
 And Circumstance, that unspiritual god  
 And miscreator, makes and helps along  
 Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,  
 Whose touch turns Hope to dust,—the dust we all  
 have trod.

Our life is a false nature : 'tis not in 100  
 The harmony of things,—this hard decree,  
 This uneradicable taint of sin,  
 This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree,

Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches be  
 The skies which rain their plagues on men like dew—  
 Disease, death, bondage—all the woes we see,  
 And worse, the woes we see not—which throb  
     through  
 The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new.

Yet let us ponder boldly—'tis a base  
 Abandonment of reason to resign 110  
 Our right of thought—our last and only place  
 Of refuge ; this, at least, shall still be mine :  
 Though from our birth the faculty divine  
 Is chain'd and tortured—cabin'd, cribb'd, confined,  
 And bred in darkness, lest the truth should shine  
 Too brightly on the unprepared mind,  
 The beam pours in, for time and skill will couch the  
     blind.

## THE COLISEUM

(CANTO IV, cxxxix-cxlv)

AND here the buzz of eager nations ran,  
 In murmur'd pity, or loud-roar'd applause,  
 As man was slaughter'd by his fellow-man.  
 And wherefore slaughter'd ? wherefore, but because  
 Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,  
 And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore not ?  
 What matters where we fall to fill the maws  
 Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot ?  
 Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

I see before me the Gladiator lie : 10  
 He leans upon his hand—his manly brow  
 Consents to death, but conquers agony,  
 And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—  
 And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow  
 From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,  
 Like the first of a thunder-shower ; and now  
 The arena swims around him—he is gone,  
 Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch  
     who won.



He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes  
 Were with his heart, and that was far away ; 20  
 He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,  
 But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,  
*There* were his young barbarians all at play,  
*There* was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,  
 Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—  
 All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire  
 And unavenged ? Arise ! ye Goths, and glut your ire !

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody steam ;  
 And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,  
 And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream 30  
 Dashing or winding as its torrent strays ;  
 Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise  
 Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,  
 My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint rays  
 On the arena void—seats crush'd—walls bow'd—  
 And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely  
 loud.

A ruin—yet what ruin ! from its mass  
 Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd ;  
 Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,  
 And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd. 40  
 Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd ?  
 Alas ! developed, opens the decay,  
 When the colossal fabric's form is near'd :  
 It will not bear the brightness of the day,  
 Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft  
 away.

But when the rising moon begins to climb  
 Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there ;  
 When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,  
 And the low night-breeze waves along the air  
 The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear, 50  
 Like laurels on the bald first Caesar's head ;  
 When the light shines serene but doth not glare,  
 Then in this magic circle raise the dead :  
 Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye tread.



‘ While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand ;  
 ‘ When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall ;  
 ‘ And when Rome falls—the World.’ From our  
     own land

Thus spake the pilgrims o’er this mighty wall  
 In Saxon times, which we are wont to call  
 Ancient ; and these three mortal things are still 60  
 On their foundations, and unalter’d all ;  
 Rome and her Ruin past Redemption’s skill,  
 The World, the same wide den—of thieves, or what ye  
     will.

## DEATH OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE

(CANTO IV, clxvii–clxxii)

HARK ! forth from the abyss a voice proceeds,  
 A long low distant murmur of dread sound,  
 Such as arises when a nation bleeds  
 With some deep and immedicable wound ;  
 Through storm and darkness yawns the rending  
     ground,  
 The gulf is thick with phantoms, but the chief  
 Seems royal still, though with her head discrown’d,  
 And pale, but lovely, with maternal grief  
 She clasps a babe, to whom her breast yields no relief.

Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art thou ? 10  
 Fond hope of many nations, art thou dead ?  
 Could not the grave forget thee, and lay low  
 Some less majestic, less beloved head ?  
 In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,  
 The mother of a moment, o’er thy boy,  
 Death hush’d that pang for ever : with thee fled  
 The present happiness and promised joy  
 Which fill’d the imperial isles so full it seem’d to cloy.

Peasants bring forth in safety.—Can it be,  
 Oh thou that wert so happy, so adored ! 20  
 Those who weep not for kings shall weep for thee,  
 And Freedom’s heart, grown heavy, cease to hoard

Her many griefs for ONE ; for she had pour'd  
 Her orisons for thee, and o'er thy head  
 Beheld her Iris.—Thou, too, lonely lord,  
 And desolate consort—vainly wert thou wed !  
 The husband of a year ! the father of the dead !

Of sackcloth was thy wedding garment made ;  
 Thy bridal's fruit is ashes : in the dust  
 The fair-hair'd Daughter of the Isles is laid, 30  
 The love of millions ! How we did intrust  
 Futurity to her ! and, though it must  
 Darken above our bones, yet fondly deem'd  
 Our children should obey her child, and bless'd  
 Her and her hoped-for seed, whose promise seem'd  
 Like stars to shepherd's eyes :—'twas but a meteor  
 beam'd.

Woe unto us, not her ; for she sleeps well :  
 The fickle reek of popular breath, the tongue  
 Of hollow counsel, the false oracle,  
 Which from the birth of monarchy hath rung 40  
 Its knell in princely ears, till the o'erstung  
 Nations have arm'd in madness, the strange fate  
 Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns, and hath flung  
 Against their blind omnipotence a weight  
 Within the opposing scale, which crushes soon or  
 late,—

These might have been her destiny ; but no,  
 Our hearts deny it : and so young, so fair,  
 Good without effort, great without a foe ;  
 But now a bride and mother—and now *there* !  
 How many ties did that stern moment tear ! 50  
 From thy Sire's to his humblest subject's breast  
 Is link'd the electric chain of that despair,  
 Whose shock was as an earthquake's, and opprest  
 The land which loved thee so that none could love  
 thee best.



✓  
I LOVE NOT MAN THE LESS, BUT  
NATURE MORE

(CANTO IV, clxxvii-clxxxiv)

OH ! that the Desert were my dwelling-place,  
With one fair Spirit for my minister,  
That I might all forget the human race,  
And, hating no one, love but only her !  
Ye elements !—in whose ennobling stir  
I feel myself exalted—Can ye not  
Accord me such a being ? Do I err  
In deeming such inhabit many a spot ?  
Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods, 10  
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,  
There is society, where none intrudes,  
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar :  
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,  
From these our interviews, in which I steal  
From all I may be, or have been before,  
To mingle with the Universe, and feel  
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll !  
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain ; 20  
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control  
Stops with the shore ; upon the watery plain  
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,  
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields  
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise  
And shake him from thee ; the vile strength he wields  
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise, 31



208 FROM 'CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE'

Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,  
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray  
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies  
His petty hope in some near port or bay,  
And dashest him again to earth :—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls  
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,  
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,  
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make  
Their clay creator the vain title take 40  
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war—  
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,  
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar  
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—  
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they ?  
Thy waters wash'd them power while they were free,  
And many a tyrant since ; their shores obey  
The stranger, slave, or savage ; their decay 50  
Has dried up realms to deserts :—not so thou ;—  
Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves' play,  
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow :  
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form  
Glasses itself in tempests ; in all time,—  
Calm or convulsed, in breeze, or gale, or storm,  
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime  
Dark-heaving—boundless, endless, and sublime,  
The image of eternity, the throne 60  
Of the Invisible ; even from out thy slime  
The monsters of the deep are made ; each zone  
Obeys thee ; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean ! and my joy  
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward : from a boy  
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me

Were a delight ; and if the freshening sea  
 Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,  
 For I was as it were a child of thee, 70  
 And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
 And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

## FROM 'THE GIAOUR'

## I

No breath of air to break the wave  
 That rolls below the Athenian's grave,  
 That tomb which, gleaming o'er the cliff,  
 First greets the homeward-veering skiff,  
 High o'er the land he saved in vain ;  
 When shall such hero live again ?

Fair clime ! where every season smiles  
 Benignant o'er those blessed isles,  
 Which, seen from far Colonna's height,  
 Make glad the heart that hails the sight, 10  
 And lend to loneliness delight.  
 There mildly dimpling, Ocean's cheek  
 Reflects the tints of many a peak  
 Caught by the laughing tides that lave  
 These Edens of the eastern wave :  
 And if at times a transient breeze  
 Break the blue crystal of the seas,  
 Or sweep one blossom from the trees,  
 How welcome is each gentle air  
 That wakes and wafts the odours there ! 20  
 For there the Rose, o'er crag or vale,  
 Sultana of the Nightingale,

The maid for whom his melody,  
 His thousand songs are heard on high,  
 Blooms blushing to her lover's tale :  
 His queen, the garden queen, his Rose,  
 Unbent by winds, unchill'd by snows,



Far from the winters of the west,  
By every breeze and season blest,  
Returns the sweets by nature given  
In softest incense back to heaven ;  
And grateful yields that smiling sky  
Her fairest hue and fragrant sigh.  
And many a summer flower is there,  
And many a shade that love might share,  
And many a grotto, meant for rest,  
That holds the pirate for a guest ;  
Whose bark in sheltering cove below  
Lurks for the passing peaceful prow,  
Till the gay mariner's guitar  
Is heard, and seen the evening star ;  
Then stealing with the muffled oar,  
Far shaded by the rocky shore,  
Rush the night-prowlers on the prey,  
And turn to groans his roundelay.  
Strange—that where Nature loved to trace,  
As if for Gods, a dwelling-place,  
And every charm and grace hath mix'd  
Within the paradise she fix'd,  
There man, enamour'd of distress,  
Should mar it into wilderness,  
And trample, brute-like, o'er each flower  
That tasks not one laborious hour ;  
Nor claims the culture of his hand  
To bloom along the fairy land,  
But springs as to preclude his care,  
And sweetly woos him—but to spare !  
Strange—that where all is peace beside,  
There passion riots in her pride,  
And lust and rapine wildly reign  
To darken o'er the fair domain.  
It is as though the fiends prevail'd  
Against the seraphs they assail'd,  
And, fix'd on heavenly thrones, should dwell  
The freed inheritors of hell ;  
So soft the scene, so form'd for joy,  
So curst the tyrants that destroy !

30

40

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He who hath bent him o'er the dead  
 Ere the first day of death is fled,  
 The first dark day of nothingness, 70  
 The last of danger and distress,  
 (Before Decay's effacing fingers  
 Have swept the lines where beauty lingers,)  
 And mark'd the mild angelic air,  
 The rapture of repose that's there,  
 The fix'd yet tender traits that streak  
 The languor of the placid cheek,  
 And—but for that sad shrouded eye,  
     That fires not, wins not, weeps not, now,  
     And but for that chill, changeless brow, 80  
 Where cold Obstruction's apathy  
 Appals the gazing mourner's heart,  
 As if to him it could impart  
 The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon ;  
 Yes, but for these and these alone,  
 Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour,  
 He still might doubt the tyrant's power ;  
 So fair, so calm, so softly seal'd,  
 The first, last look by death reveal'd !  
 Such is the aspect of this shore ; 90  
 'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more !  
 So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,  
 We start, for soul is wanting there.  
 Hers is the loveliness in death,  
 That parts not quite with parting breath ;  
 But beauty with that fearful bloom,  
 That hue which haunts it to the tomb,  
 Expression's last receding ray,  
 A gilded halo hovering round decay,  
 The farewell beam of Feeling pass'd away ! 100  
 Spark of that flame, perchance of heavenly birth,  
 Which gleams, but warms no more its cherish'd  
     earth !

Clime of the unforgotten brave !  
 Whose land from plain to mountain-cave  
 Was Freedom's home or Glory's grave !

Shrine of the mighty ! can it be,  
That this is all remains of thee ?  
Approach, thou craven crouching slave :  
Say, is not this Thermopylæ ?  
These waters blue that round you lave,— 110  
Oh servile offspring of the free,  
Pronounce what sea, what shore is this ?  
The gulf, the rock of Salamis !  
These scenes, their story not unknown,  
Arise, and make again your own ;  
Snatch from the ashes of your sires  
The embers of their former fires ;  
And he who in the strife expires  
Will add to theirs a name of fear  
That Tyranny shall quake to hear, 120  
And leave his sons a hope, a fame,  
They too will rather die than shame :  
For Freedom's battle once begun,  
Bequeathed by bleeding Sire to Son,  
Though baffled oft is ever won.  
Bear witness, Greece, thy living page !  
Attest it many a deathless age !  
While kings, in dusty darkness hid,  
Have left a nameless pyramid,  
Thy heroes, though the general doom 130  
Hath swept the column from their tomb,  
A mightier monument command,  
The mountains of their native land !  
There points thy Muse to stranger's eye  
The graves of those that cannot die !  
'Twere long to tell, and sad to trace,  
Each step from splendour to disgrace ;  
Enough—no foreign foe could quell  
Thy soul, till from itself it fell ;  
Yes ! Self-abasement paved the way 140  
To villain-bonds and despot sway.

## II

As rising on its purple wing  
 The insect queen of eastern spring,  
 O'er emerald meadows of Kashmeer  
 Invites the young pursuer near,  
 And leads him on from flower to flower  
 A weary chase and wasted hour,  
 Then leaves him, as it soars on high,  
 With panting heart and tearful eye :  
 So Beauty lures the full-grown child,  
 With hue as bright, and wing as wild ; 10  
 A chase of idle hopes and fears,  
 Begun in folly, closed in tears.  
 If won, to equal ills betray'd,  
 Woe waits the insect and the maid ;  
 A life of pain, the loss of peace,  
 From infant's play, and man's caprice :  
 The lovely toy so fiercely sought  
 Hath lost its charm by being caught,  
 For every touch that woo'd its stay  
 Hath brush'd its brightest hues away, 20  
 Till charm, and hue, and beauty gone,  
 'Tis left to fly or fall alone.  
 With wounded wing, or bleeding breast,  
 Ah ! where shall either victim rest ?  
 Can this with faded pinion soar  
 From rose to tulip as before ?  
 Or Beauty, blighted in an hour,  
 Find joy within her broken bower ?  
 No : gayer insects fluttering by  
 Ne'er droop the wing o'er those that die, 30  
 And lovelier things have mercy shown  
 To every failing but their own,  
 And every woe a tear can claim  
 Except an erring sister's shame.

. . . . .  
 The Mind, that broods o'er guilty woes,  
 Is like the Scorpion girt by fire ;  
 In circle narrowing as it glows,



The flames around their captive close,  
 Till inly search'd by thousand throes,  
 And maddening in her ire, 40  
 One sad and sole relief she knows,  
 The sting she nourish'd for her foes,  
 Whose venom never yet was vain,  
 Gives but one pang and cures all pain,  
 And darts into her desperate brain :  
 So do the dark in soul expire,  
 Or live like Scorpion girt by fire ;  
 So writhes the mind Remorse hath riven,  
 Unfit for earth, undoomed for heaven,  
 Darkness above, despair beneath, 50  
 Around it flame, within it death !

'KNOW YE THE LAND ?'

(From *The Bride of Abydos*.)

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle  
 Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime ?  
 Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,  
 Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime !  
 Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,  
 Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine ;  
 Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppress'd with  
 perfume,  
 Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gúl in her bloom ;  
 Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,  
 And the voice of the nightingale never is mute ; 10  
 Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,  
 In colour though varied, in beauty may vie,  
 And the purple of ocean is deepest in dye ;  
 Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,  
 And all, save the spirit of man, is divine ?  
 'Tis the clime of the East ; 'tis the land of the Sun—  
 Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done ?  
 Oh ! wild as the accents of lovers' farewell  
 Are the hearts which they bear, and the tales which  
 they tell.

## THE HELLESPONT

*(The Bride of Abydos, II, i-iv)*

## I

THE winds are high on Helle's wave,  
 As on that night of stormy water  
 When Love, who sent, forgot to save  
 The young, the beautiful, the brave,  
 The lonely hope of Sestos' daughter.  
 Oh ! when alone along the sky  
 Her turret-torch was blazing high,  
 Though rising gale, and breaking foam,  
 And shrieking sea-birds warn'd him home ;  
 And clouds aloft and tides below,  
 With signs and sounds, forbade to go,  
 He could not see, he would not hear,  
 Or sound or sign foreboding fear ;  
 His eye but saw that light of love,  
 The only star it hail'd above ;  
 His ear but rang with Hero's song,  
 ' Ye waves, divide not lovers long ! '—  
 That tale is old, but love anew  
 May nerve young hearts to prove as true.

10

## II

The winds are high, and Helle's tide  
 Rolls darkly heaving to the main ;  
 And Night's descending shadows hide  
 That field with blood bedew'd in vain,  
 The desert of old Priam's pride ;  
 The tombs, sole relics of his reign,  
 All—save immortal dreams that could beguile  
 The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle !

20

## III

Oh ! yet—for there my steps have been ;  
 These feet have press'd the sacred shore,  
 These limbs that buoyant wave hath borne—  
 Minstrel ! with thee to muse, to mourn,  
 To trace again those fields of yore,

31



Believing every hillock green  
 Contains no fabled hero's ashes,  
 And that around the undoubted scene  
 Thine own ' broad Hellespont ' still dashes,  
 Be long my lot ! and cold were he  
 Who there could gaze denying thee !

## IV

The night hath closed on Helle's stream,  
 Nor yet hath risen on Ida's hill 40  
 That moon, which shone on his high theme :  
 No warrior chides her peaceful beam,  
 But conscious shepherds bless it still.  
 Their flocks are grazing on the mound  
 Of him who felt the Dardan's arrow :  
 That mighty heap of gather'd ground  
 Which Ammon's son ran proudly round,  
 By nations raised, by monarchs crown'd,  
 Is now a lone and nameless barrow !  
 Within—thy dwelling-place how narrow ! 50  
 Without—can only strangers breathe  
 The name of him that *was* beneath :  
 Dust long outlasts the storied stone ;  
 But Thou—thy very dust is gone !

## FROM ' THE CORSAIR '

' O'ER the glad waters of the dark blue sea,  
 Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free,  
 Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,  
 Survey our empire, and behold our home !  
 These are our realms, no limits to their sway—  
 Our flag the sceptre all who meet obey.  
 Ours the wild life in tumult still to range  
 From toil to rest, and joy in every change.  
 Oh, who can tell ? not thou, luxurious slave !  
 Whose soul would sicken o'er the heaving wave ; 10  
 Not thou, vain lord of wantonness and ease !  
 Whom slumber soothes not—pleasure cannot please—



Oh, who can tell, save he whose heart hath tried,  
And danced in triumph o'er the waters wide,  
The exulting sense—the pulse's maddening play,  
That thrills the wanderer of that trackless way?  
That for itself can woo the approaching fight,  
And turn what some deem danger to delight;  
That seeks what cravens shun with more than zeal,  
And where the feeble faint can only feel— 20  
Feel—to the rising bosom's inmost core,  
Its hope awaken and its spirit soar?  
No dread of death—if with us die our foes—  
Save that it seems even duller than repose:  
Come when it will—we snatch the life of life—  
When lost—what reck's it—by disease or strife?  
Let him who crawls enamour'd of decay,  
Cling to his couch, and sicken years away:  
Heave his thick breath, and shake his palsied head;  
Ours—the fresh turf, and not the feverish bed. 30  
While gasp by gasp he falters forth his soul,  
Ours with one pang—one bound—escapes control.  
His corse may boast its urn and narrow cave,  
And they who loathed his life may gild his grave:  
Ours are the tears, though few, sincerely shed,  
When Ocean shrouds and sepulchres our dead.  
For us, even banquets fond regret supply  
In the red cup that crowns our memory;  
And the brief epitaph in danger's day,  
When those who win at length divide the prey, 40  
And cry, Remembrance saddening o'er each brow,  
How had the brave who fell exulted *now*!



## THE SIEGE OF CORINTH

IN the year since Jesus died for men,  
 Eighteen hundred years and ten,  
 We were a gallant company,  
 Riding o'er land, and sailing o'er sea.  
 Oh ! but we went merrily !  
 We forded the river, and clomb the high hill,  
 Never our steeds for a day stood still ;  
 Whether we lay in the cave or the shed,  
 Our sleep fell soft on the hardest bed :  
 Whether we couched in our rough capote,                      10  
 On the rougher plank of our gliding boat,  
 Or stretched on the beach, or our saddles spread,  
 As a pillow beneath the resting head,  
 Fresh we woke upon the morrow :  
     All our thoughts and words had scope,  
     We had health, and we had hope,  
 Toil and travel, but no sorrow.  
 We were of all tongues and creeds ;—  
 Some were those who counted beads,  
 Some of mosque, and some of church,                      20  
     And some, or I mis-say, of neither ;  
 Yet through the wide world might ye search,  
     Nor find a motlier crew nor blither.  
 But some are dead, and some are gone,  
 And some are scattered and alone,  
 And some are rebels on the hills  
     That look along Epirus' valleys.  
     Where Freedom still at moments rallies,  
 And pays in blood Oppression's ills ;  
     And some are in a far countree,                      30  
 And some all restlessly at home ;  
     But never more, oh ! never, we  
 Shall meet to revel and to roam.

But those hardy days flew cheerily !  
And when they now fall drearily,  
My thoughts, like swallows, skim the main,  
And bear my spirit back again  
Over the earth, and through the air,  
A wild bird and a wanderer.  
'Tis this that ever wakes my strain, 40  
And oft, too oft, implores again  
The few who may endure my lay,  
To follow me so far away.  
Stranger, wilt thou follow now,  
And sit with me on Acro-Corinth's brow ?

## I

Many a vanish'd year and age,  
And tempest's breath, and battle's rage,  
Have swept o'er Corinth ; yet she stands,  
A fortress form'd to Freedom's hands.  
The whirlwind's wrath, the earthquake's shock, 51  
Have left untouch'd her hoary rock,  
The keystone of a land, which still,  
Though fall'n, looks proudly on that hill,  
The landmark to the double tide  
That purpling rolls on either side,  
As if their waters chafed to meet,  
Yet pause and crouch beneath her feet.  
But could the blood before her shed  
Since first Timoleon's brother bled, 60  
Or baffled Persia's despot fled,  
Arise from out the earth which drank  
The stream of slaughter as it sank,  
That sanguine ocean would o'erflow  
Her isthmus idly spread below :  
Or could the bones of all the slain,  
Who perish'd there, be piled again,  
That rival pyramid would rise  
More mountain-like, through those clear skies,  
Than yon tower-capp'd Acropolis,  
Which seems the very clouds to kiss. 70



## II

On dun Cithæron's ridge appears  
The gleam of twice ten thousand spears ;  
And downward to the Isthmian plain,  
From shore to shore of either main,  
The tent is pitch'd, the crescent shines  
Along the Moslem's leaguering lines ;  
And the dusk Spahi's bands advance  
Beneath each bearded pacha's glance ;  
And far and wide as eye can reach  
The turban'd cohorts throng the beach ; 80  
And there the Arab's camel kneels,  
And there his steed the Tartar wheels ;  
The Turcoman hath left his herd,  
The sabre round his loins to gird ;  
And there the volleying thunders pour,  
Till waves grow smoother to the roar.  
The trench is dug, the cannon's breath  
Wings the far hissing globe of death ;  
Fast whirl the fragments from the wall,  
Which crumbles with the ponderous ball ; 90  
And from that wall the foe replies,  
O'er dusty plain and smoky skies,  
With fires that answer fast and well  
The summons of the Infidel.

## III

But near and nearest to the wall  
Of those who wish and work its fall,  
With deeper skill in war's black art  
Than Othman's sons, and high of heart  
As any chief that ever stood  
Triumphant in the fields of blood ; 100  
From post to post, and deed to deed,  
Fast spurring on his reeking steed,  
Where sallying ranks the trench assail,  
And make the foremost Moslem quail ;

Or where the battery, guarded well,  
Remains as yet impregnable,  
Alighting cheerly to inspire  
The soldier slackening in his fire ;  
The first and freshest of the host  
Which Stamboul's Sultan there can boast, 110  
To guide the follower o'er the field,  
To point the tube, the lance to wield,  
Or whirl around the bickering blade ;—  
Was Alp, the Adrian renegade !

## IV

From Venice—once a race of worth  
His gentle sires—he drew his birth ;  
But late an exile from her shore,  
Against his countrymen he bore  
The arms they taught to bear ; and now 120  
The turban girt his shaven brow.  
Through many a change had Corinth pass'd  
With Greece to Venice' rule at last ;  
And here, before her walls, with those  
To Greece and Venice equal foes,  
He stood a foe, with all the zeal  
Which young and fiery converts feel,  
Within whose heated bosom throngs  
The memory of a thousand wrongs.  
To him had Venice ceased to be 130  
Her ancient civic boast—' the Free ' ;  
And in the palace of St. Mark  
Unnamed accusers in the dark  
Within the ' Lion's mouth ' had placed  
A charge against him uneffaced :  
He fled in time, and saved his life,  
To waste his future years in strife,  
That taught his land how great her loss  
In him who triumph'd o'er the Cross,  
'Gainst which he rear'd the Crescent high, 140  
And battled to avenge or die.

## V

Coumourgi—he whose closing scene  
 Adorn'd the triumph of Eugene,  
 When on Carlowitz' bloody plain,  
 The last and mightiest of the slain,  
 He sank, regretting not to die,  
 But cursed the Christian's victory—  
 Coumourgi—can his glory cease,  
 That latest conqueror of Greece,  
 Till Christian hands to Greece restore  
 The freedom Venice gave of yore ? 150  
 A hundred years have roll'd away  
 Since he refix'd the Moslem's sway ;  
 And now he led the Mussulman,  
 And gave the guidance of the van  
 To Alp, who well repaid the trust  
 By cities levell'd with the dust ;  
 And proved, by many a deed of death,  
 How firm his heart in novel faith.

## VI

The walls grew weak ; and fast and hot  
 Against them pour'd the ceaseless shot, 160  
 With unabating fury sent  
 From battery to battlement ;  
 And thunder-like the pealing din  
 Rose from each heated culverin ;  
 And here and there some crackling dome  
 Was fired before the exploding bomb ;  
 And as the fabric sank beneath  
 The shattering shell's volcanic breath,  
 In red and wreathing columns flashed  
 The flame, as loud the ruin crashed, 170  
 Or into countless meteors driven,  
 Its earth-stars melted into heaven ;  
 Whose clouds that day grew doubly dun,  
 Impervious to the hidden sun,  
 With volumed smoke that slowly grew  
 To one wide sky of sulphurous hue.



## VII

But not for vengeance, long delay'd,  
Alone, did Alp, the renegade,  
The Moslem warriors sternly teach  
His skill to pierce the promised breach : 180  
Within these walls a maid was pent  
His hope would win, without consent  
Of that inexorable sire,  
Whose heart refused him in its ire,  
When Alp, beneath his Christian name,  
Her virgin hand aspired to claim.  
In happier mood, and earlier time,  
While unimpeach'd for traitorous crime,  
Gayest in gondola or hall,  
He glitter'd through the Carnival ; 190  
And tuned the softest serenade  
That e'er on Adria's waters play'd  
At midnight to Italian maid.

## VIII

And many deem'd her heart was won,  
For sought by numbers, given to none,  
Had young Francesca's hand remain'd  
Still by the church's bonds unchain'd :  
And when the Adriatic bore  
Lanciotto to the Paynim shore,  
Her wonted smiles were seen to fail, 200  
And pensive wax'd the maid and pale ;  
More constant at confessional,  
More rare at masque and festival ;  
Or seen at such, with downcast eyes,  
Which conquer'd hearts they ceased to prize :  
With listless look she seems to gaze :  
With humbler care her form arrays ;  
Her voice less lively in the song ;  
Her step, though light, less fleet among  
The pairs, on whom the Morning's glance 210  
Breaks, yet unsated with the dance.

## IX

Sent by the state to guard the land,  
 (Which, wrested from the Moslem's hand,  
 While Sobieski tamed his pride  
 By Buda's wall and Danube's side,  
 The chiefs of Venice wrung away  
 From Patra to Eubœa's bay,)  
 Minotti held in Corinth's towers  
 The Doge's delegated powers,  
 While yet the pitying eye of Peace  
 Smiled o'er her long-forgotten Greece :  
 And ere that faithless truce was broke  
 Which freed her from the unchristian yoke,  
 With him his gentle daughter came ;  
 Nor there, since Menelaus' dame  
 Forsook her lord and land, to prove  
 What woes await on lawless love,  
 Had fairer form adorn'd the shore  
 Than she, the matchless stranger, bore.

220

## X

The wall is rent, the ruins yawn ;  
 And with to-morrow's earliest dawn,  
 O'er the disjointed mass shall vault  
 The foremost of the fierce assault.  
 The bands are rank'd ; the chosen van  
 Of Tartar and of Mussulman,  
 The full of hope, misnamed 'forlorn',  
 Who hold the thought of death in scorn,  
 And win their way with falchion's force,  
 Or pave the path with many a corse,  
 O'er which the following brave may rise,  
 Their stepping-stone—the last who dies !

230

240

## XI

'Tis midnight : on the mountains brown  
 The cold, round moon shines deeply down ;  
 Blue roll the waters, blue the sky  
 Spreads like an ocean hung on high,

Bespangled with those isles of light,  
So wildly, spiritually bright;  
Who ever gazed upon them shining  
And turn'd to earth without repining.  
Nor wish'd for wings to flee away, 250  
And mix with their eternal ray?  
The waves on either shore lay there  
Calm, clear, and azure as the air;  
And scarce their foam the pebbles shook,  
But murmur'd meekly as the brook.  
The winds were pillow'd on the waves;  
The banners droop'd along their staves,  
And, as they fell around them furling,  
Above them shone the crescent curling;  
And that deep silence was unbroke, 260  
Save where the watch his signal spoke,  
Save where the steed neigh'd oft and shrill,  
And echo answer'd from the hill,  
And the wide hum of that wild host  
Rustled like leaves from coast to coast,  
As rose the Muezzin's voice in air  
In midnight call to wonted prayer;  
It rose, that chanted mournful strain,  
Like some lone spirit's o'er the plain:  
'Twas musical, but sadly sweet, 270  
Such as when winds and harp-strings meet,  
And take a long unmeasured tone,  
To mortal minstrelsy unknown.  
It seem'd to those within the wall  
A cry prophetic of their fall:  
It struck even the besieger's ear  
With something ominous and drear,  
An undefined and sudden thrill,  
Which makes the heart a moment still,  
Then beat with quicker pulse, ashamed 280  
Of that strange sense its silence framed;  
Such as a sudden passing-bell  
Wakes, though but for a stranger's knell.



## XII

The tent of Alp was on the shore ;  
The sound was hush'd, the prayer was o'er ;  
The watch was set, the night-round made,  
All mandates issued and obey'd :  
'Tis but another anxious night,  
His pains the morrow may requite  
With all revenge and love can pay, 290  
In guerdon for their long delay.  
Few hours remain, and he hath need  
Of rest, to nerve for many a deed  
Of slaughter ; but within his soul  
The thoughts like troubled waters roll.  
He stood alone among the host ;  
Not his the loud fanatic boast  
To plant the Crescent o'er the Cross,  
Or risk a life with little loss,  
Secure in paradise to be 300  
By Houris loved immortally :  
Nor his, what burning patriots feel,  
The stern exaltedness of zeal,  
Profuse of blood, untired in toil,  
When battling on the parent soil.  
He stood alone—a renegade  
Against the country he betrayed ;  
He stood alone amidst his band,  
Without a trusted heart or hand :  
They follow'd him, for he was brave, 310  
And great the spoil he got and gave ;  
They crouch'd to him, for he had skill  
To warp and wield the vulgar will :  
But still his Christian origin  
With them was little less than sin.  
They envied even the faithless fame  
He earn'd beneath a Moslem name ;  
Since he, their mightiest chief, had been  
In youth a bitter Nazarene.  
They did not know how pride can stoop, 320  
When baffled feelings withering droop ;

They did not know how hate can burn  
In hearts once changed from soft to stern ;  
Nor all the false and fatal zeal  
The convert of revenge can feel.  
He ruled them—man may rule the worst,  
By ever daring to be first :  
So lions o'er the jackal sway ;  
The jackal points, he fells the prey,  
Then on the vulgar yelling press,  
To gorge the relics of success.

330

## XIII

His head grows fever'd, and his pulse  
The quick successive throbs convulse :  
In vain from side to side he throws  
His form, in courtship of repose ;  
Or if he dozed, a sound, a start  
Awoke him with a sunken heart.  
The turban on his hot brow press'd,  
The mail weigh'd lead-like on his breast,  
Though oft and long beneath its weight  
Upon his eyes had slumber sate,  
Without or couch or canopy,  
Except a rougher field and sky  
Than now might yield a warrior's bed,  
Than now along the heaven was spread.  
He could not rest, he could not stay  
Within his tent to wait for day,  
But walk'd him forth along the sand,  
Where thousand sleepers strew'd the strand.  
What pillow'd them ? and why should he  
More wakeful than the humblest be,  
Since more their peril, worse their toil ?  
And yet they fearless dream of spoil ;  
While he alone, where thousands pass'd  
A night of sleep, perchance their last,  
In sickly vigil wander'd on,  
And envied all he gazed upon.

340

35c

## XIV

He felt his soul become more light  
 Beneath the freshness of the night.  
 Cool was the silent sky, though calm, 360  
 And bathed his brow with airy balm :  
 Behind, the camp—before him lay,  
 In many a winding creek and bay,  
 Lepanto's gulf ; and, on the brow  
 Of Delphi's hill, unshaken snow,  
 High and eternal, such as shone  
 Through thousand summers brightly gone,  
 Along the gulf, the mount, the clime ;  
 It will not melt, like man, to time :  
 Tyrant and slave are swept away, 370  
 Less form'd to wear before the ray ;  
 But that white veil, the lightest, frailest,  
 Which on the mighty mount thou hailest,  
 While tower and tree are torn and rent,  
 Shines o'er its craggy battlement ;  
 In form a peak, in height a cloud,  
 In texture like a hovering shroud,  
 Thus high by parting Freedom spread,  
 As from her fond abode she fled,  
 And linger'd on the spot, where long 380  
 Her prophet spirit spake in song.  
 Oh ! still her step at moments falters  
 O'er wither'd fields, and ruin'd altars,  
 And fain would wake, in souls too broken,  
 By pointing to each glorious token :  
 But vain her voice, till better days  
 Dawn in those yet remember'd rays,  
 Which shone upon the Persian flying,  
 And saw the Spartan smile in dying.

## XV

Not mindless of these mighty times 390  
 Was Alp, despite his flight and crimes ;  
 And through this night, as on he wander'd,  
 And o'er the past and present ponder'd,



And thought upon the glorious dead  
 Who there in better cause had bled,  
 He felt how faint and feebly dim  
 The fame that could accrue to him,  
 Who cheer'd the band, and waved the sword,  
 A traitor in a turban'd horde ;  
 And led them to the lawless siege, 400  
 Whose best success were sacrilege.  
 Not so had those his fancy number'd,  
 The chiefs whose dust around him slumber'd ;  
 Their phalanx marshall'd on the plain,  
 Whose bulwarks were not then in vain.  
 They fell devoted, but undying ;  
 The very gale their names seem'd sighing ;  
 The waters murmur'd of their name ;  
 The woods were peopled with their fame ;  
 The silent pillar, lone and grey, 410  
 Claim'd kindred with their sacred clay ;  
 Their spirits wrapped the dusky mountain,  
 Their memory sparkled o'er the fountain ;  
 The meanest rill, the mightiest river  
 Roll'd mingling with their fame for ever.  
 Despite of every yoke she bears,  
 That land is glory's still and theirs !  
 'Tis still a watchword to the earth :  
 When man would do a deed of worth  
 He points to Greece, and turns to tread, 420  
 So sanction'd, on the tyrant's head :  
 He looks to her, and rushes on  
 Where life is lost, or freedom won.

## XVI

Still by the shore Alp mutely mused,  
 And woo'd the freshness Night diffused.  
 There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea,  
 Which changeless rolls eternally ;  
 So that wildest of waves, in their angriest mood,  
 Scarce break on the bounds of the land for a rood ;  
 And the powerless moon beholds them flow, 430  
 Heedless if she come or go :

Calm or high, in main or bay,  
 On their course she hath no sway.  
 The rock unworn its base doth bare,  
 And looks o'er the surf, but it comes not there ;  
 And the fringe of the foam may be seen below,  
 On the line that it left long ages ago :  
 A smooth short space of yellow sand  
 Between it and the greener land.

He wander'd on along the beach, 440  
 Till within the range of a carbine's reach  
 Of the leaguer'd wall ; but they saw him not,  
 Or how could he 'scape from the hostile shot ?  
 Did traitors lurk in the Christians' hold ?  
 Were their hands grown stiff, or their hearts wax'd cold ?  
 I know not, in sooth ; but from yonder wall  
 There flash'd no fire, and there hiss'd no ball,  
 Though he stood beneath the bastion's frown,  
 That flank'd the seaward gate of the town ;  
 Though he heard the sound, and could almost tell 450  
 The sullen words of the sentinel,  
 As his measured step on the stone below  
 Clank'd, as he paced it to and fro ;  
 And he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall  
 Hold o'er the dead their carnival,  
 Gorging and growling o'er carcass and limb ;  
 They were too busy to bark at him !  
 From a Tartar's skull they had stripp'd the flesh,  
 As ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh ;  
 And their white tusks crunch'd o'er the whiter skull,  
 As it slipp'd through their jaws, when their edge grew  
     dull, 461  
 As they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead,  
 When they scarce could rise from the spot where they  
     fed ;  
 So well had they broken a lingering fast  
 With those who had fallen for that night's repast.  
 And Alp knew, by the turbans that roll'd on the sand,  
 The foremost of these were the best of his band :  
 Crimson and green were the shawls of their wear,



And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair,  
All the rest was shaven and bare. 470  
The scalps were in the wild dog's maw,  
The hair was tangled round his jaw :  
But close by the shore, on the edge of the gulf,  
There sat a vulture flapping a wolf,  
Who had stolen from the hills, but kept away,  
Scared by the dogs, from the human prey ;  
But he seized on his share of a steed that lay,  
Pick'd by the birds, on the sands of the bay.

## XVII

Alp turn'd him from the sickening sight :  
Never had shaken his nerves in fight ; 480  
But he better could brook to behold the dying,  
Deep in the tide of their warm blood lying,  
Scorch'd with the death-thirst, and writhing in vain,  
Than the perishing dead who are past all pain.  
There is something of pride in the perilous hour,  
Whate'er be the shape in which death may lower ;  
For Fame is there to say who bleeds,  
And Honour's eye on daring deeds !  
But when all is past, it is humbling to tread 490  
O'er the weltering field of the tombless dead,  
And see worms of the earth, and fowls of the air,  
Beasts of the forest, all gathering there ;  
All regarding man as their prey,  
All rejoicing in his decay.

## XVIII

There is a temple in ruin stands,  
Fashion'd by long forgotten hands ;  
Two or three columns, and many a stone,  
Marble and granite, with grass o'ergrown !  
Out upon Time ! it will leave no more  
Of the things to come than the things before ! 500  
Out upon Time ! who for ever will leave  
But enough of the past for the future to grieve



O'er that which hath been, and o'er that which must be :  
 What we have seen, our sons shall see ;  
 Remnants of things that have pass'd away,  
 Fragments of stone, reared by creatures of clay !

## XIX

He sate him down at a pillar's base,  
 And pass'd his hand athwart his face ;  
 Like one in dreary musing mood,  
 Declining was his attitude ;

510

His head was drooping on his breast,  
 Fever'd, throbbing, and oppressed ;  
 And o'er his brow, so downward bent,  
 Oft his beating fingers went,  
 Hurriedly, as you may see  
 Your own run over the ivory key,  
 Ere the measured tone is taken  
 By the chords you would awaken.

There he sate all heavily,

As he heard the night-wind sigh.

520

Was it the wind through some hollow stone  
 Sent that soft and tender moan ?

He lifted his head, and he look'd on the sea,  
 But it was unrippled as glass may be ;

He look'd on the long grass—it waved not a blade ;  
 How was that gentle sound convey'd ?

He look'd to the banners—each flag lay still,  
 So did the leaves on Cithæron's hill,

And he felt not a breath come over his cheek ;  
 What did that sudden sound bespeak ?

530

He turn'd to the left—is he sure of sight ?

There sate a lady, youthful and bright !

## XX

He started up with more of fear  
 Than if an armed foe were near.

' God of my fathers ! what is here ?  
 Who art thou ? and wherefore sent  
 So near a hostile armament ? '

His trembling hands refused to sign

The cross he deem'd no more divine :  
He had resumed it in that hour,  
But conscience wrung away the power.  
He gazed, he saw : he knew the face  
Of beauty, and the form of grace ;  
It was Francesca by his side,  
The maid who might have been his bride !

540

The rose was yet upon her cheek,  
But mellow'd with a tenderer streak :  
Where was the play of her soft lips fled ?  
Gone was the smile that enliven'd their red.  
The ocean's calm within their view,  
Beside her eye had less of blue ;  
But like that cold wave it stood still,  
And its glance, though clear, was chill.  
Around her form a thin robe twining,  
Nought conceal'd her bosom shining ;  
Through the parting of her hair,  
Floating darkly downward there,  
Her rounded arm show'd white and bare :  
And ere yet she made reply,  
Once she raised her hand on high ;  
It was so wan, and transparent of hue,  
You might have seen the moon shine through.

550

560

## XXI

' I come from my rest to him I love best,  
That I may be happy, and he may be blessed,  
I have pass'd the guards, the gate, the wall ;  
Sought thee in safety through foes and all.  
'Tis said the lion will turn and flee  
From a maid in the pride of her purity ;  
And the Power on high, that can shield the good  
Thus from the tyrant of the wood,  
Hath extended its mercy to guard me as well  
From the hands of the leaguering infidel.  
I come—and if I come in vain,  
Never, oh never, we meet again !

570



Thou hast done a fearful deed  
In falling away from thy fathers' creed :  
But dash that turban to earth, and sign  
The sign of the cross, and for ever be mine ;  
Wring the black drop from thy heart,  
And to-morrow unites us no more to part.'

580

' And where should our bridal couch be spread ?  
In the midst of the dying and the dead ?  
For to-morrow we give to the slaughter and flame  
The sons and the shrines of the Christian name.  
None, save thou and thine, I've sworn,  
Shall be left upon the morn :  
But thee will I bear to a lovely spot,  
Where our hands shall be join'd, and our sorrow  
forgot.

There thou yet shalt be my bride,  
When once again I've quell'd the pride  
Of Venice ; and her hated race  
Have felt the arm they would debase  
Scourge, with a whip of scorpions, those  
Whom vice and envy made my foes.'

590

Upon his hand she laid her own—  
Light was the touch, but it thrill'd to the bone,  
And shot a chillness to his heart,  
Which fix'd him beyond the power to start.  
Though slight was that grasp so mortal cold,  
He could not loose him from its hold ;  
But never did clasp of one so dear  
Strike on the pulse with such feeling of fear,  
As those thin fingers, long and white,  
Froze through his blood by their touch that night.  
The feverish glow of his brow was gone,  
And his heart sank so still that it felt like stone,  
As he look'd on the face, and beheld its hue,  
So deeply changed from what he knew :  
Fair but faint—without the ray  
Of mind, that made each feature play  
Like sparkling waves on a sunny day ;

600

610



And her motionless lips lay still as death,  
And her words came forth without her breath,  
And there rose not a heave o'er her bosom's swell,  
And there seem'd not a pulse in her veins to dwell.  
Though her eye shone out, yet the lids were fix'd,  
And the glance that it gave was wild and unmix'd  
With aught of change, as the eyes may seem  
Of the restless who walk in a troubled dream ;  
Like the figures on arras, that gloomily glare, 620  
Stirr'd by the breath of the wintry air,  
So seen by the dying lamp's fitful light,  
Lifeless, but life-like, and awful to sight ;  
As they seem, through the dimness, about to come down  
From the shadowy wall where their images frown ;  
Fearfully flitting to and fro,  
As the gusts on the tapestry come and go.

' If not for love of me be given  
Thus much, then, for the love of Heaven,— 630  
Again I say—that turban tear  
From off thy faithless brow, and swear  
Thine injured country's sons to spare,  
Or thou art lost ; and never shalt see—  
Not earth—that's past—but heaven or me.  
If this thou dost accord, albeit  
A heavy doom 'tis thine to meet,  
That doom shall half absolve thy sin,  
And mercy's gate may receive thee within :  
But pause one moment more, and take 640  
The curse of Him thou didst forsake ;  
And look once more to heaven, and see  
Its love for ever shut from thee.  
There is a light cloud by the moon—  
'Tis passing, and will pass full soon—  
If, by the time its vapoury sail  
Hath ceased her shaded orb to veil,  
Thy heart within thee is not changed,  
Then God and man are both avenged ;  
Dark will thy doom be, darker still 650  
Thine immortality of ill.'

Alp look'd to heaven, and saw on high  
 The sign she spake of in the sky ;  
 But his heart was swollen, and turn'd aside,  
 By deep interminable pride.  
 This first false passion of his breast  
 Roll'd like a torrent o'er the rest.  
*He* sue for mercy ! *He* dismay'd  
 By wild words of a timid maid !  
*He*, wrong'd by Venice, vow to save  
 Her sons, devoted to the grave !  
 No—though that cloud were thunder's worst,  
 And charged to crush him—let it burst !

660

He look'd upon it earnestly,  
 Without an accent of reply ;  
 He watch'd it passing ; it is flown :  
 Full on his eye the clear moon shone,  
 And thus he spake—' Whate'er my fate,  
 I am no changeling—'tis too late :  
 The reed in storms may bow and quiver,  
 Then rise again ; the tree must shiver.  
 What Venice made me, I must be,  
 Her foe in all, save love to thee :  
 But thou art safe : oh, fly with me !'  
 He turn'd, but she is gone !  
 Nothing is there but the column stone.  
 Hath she sunk in the earth, or melted in air ?  
 He saw not—he knew not—but nothing is there.

670

## XXII

The night is past, and shines the sun  
 As if that morn were a jocund one.  
 Lightly and brightly breaks away  
 The Morning from her mantle grey,  
 And the Noon will look on a sultry day.  
 Hark to the trump, and the drum,  
 And the mournful sound of the barbarous horn,  
 And the flap of the banners, that flit as they're borne,

680



And the neigh of the steed, and the multitude's hum,  
And the clash, and the shout, 'They come! they come!'  
The horsetails are pluck'd from the ground, and the  
sword

From its sheath; and they form, and but wait for the  
word.

Tartar, and Spahi, and Turcoman, 690

Strike your tents, and throng to the van;

Mount ye, spur ye, skirr the plain,

That the fugitive may flee in vain,

When he breaks from the town; and none escape,

Aged or young, in the Christian shape;

While your fellows on foot, in a fiery mass,

Bloodstain the breach through which they pass.

The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the rein;

Curved is each neck, and flowing each mane;

White is the foam of their champ on the bit; 700

The spears are uplifted; the matches are lit;

The cannon are pointed, and ready to roar,

And crush the wall they have crumbled before:

Forms in his phalanx each janizar;

Alp at their head; his right arm is bare,

So is the blade of his scimitar;

The khan and the pachas are all at their post;

The vizier himself at the head of the host.

When the culverin's signal is fired, then on;

Leave not in Corinth a living one— 710

A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,

A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her walls.

God and the prophet—Alla Hu!

Up to the skies with that wild halloo!

'There the breach lies for passage, the ladder to scale;

And your hands on your sabres, and how should ye  
fail?

He who first downs with the red cross may crave

His heart's dearest wish; let him ask it, and have!'

Thus utter'd Coumourgi, the dauntless vizier;

The reply was the brandish of sabre and spear, 720

And the shout of fierce thousands in joyous ire:—

Silence—hark to the signal—fire!



## XXIII

As the wolves, that headlong go  
On the stately buffalo,  
Though with fiery eyes, and angry roar,  
And hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore,  
He tramples on earth, or tosses on high  
The foremost, who rush on his strength but to die :  
Thus against the wall they went,  
Thus the first were backward bent ; 730  
Many a bosom, sheathed in brass,  
Strew'd the earth like broken glass,  
Shiver'd by the shot, that tore  
The ground whereon they moved no more :  
Even as they fell, in files they lay,  
Like the mower's grass at the close of day,  
When his work is done on the levell'd plain ;  
Such was the fall of the foremost slain.

## XXIV

As the spring-tides, with heavy splash,  
From the cliffs invading dash 740  
Huge fragments, sapp'd by the ceaseless flow,  
Till white and thundering down they go,  
Like the avalanche's snow  
On the Alpine vales below ;  
Thus at length, outbreathed and worn,  
Corinth's sons were downward borne  
By the long and oft renew'd  
Charge of the Moslem multitude.  
In firmness they stood, and in masses they fell,  
Heaped by the host of the infidel, 750  
Hand to hand, and foot to foot :  
Nothing there, save death, was mute :  
Stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry  
For quarter, or for victory,  
Mingle there with the volleying thunder,  
Which makes the distant cities wonder  
How the sounding battle goes,  
If with them, or for their foes ;

If they must mourn, or may rejoice  
In that annihilating voice,  
Which pierces the deep hills through and through  
With an echo dread and new :  
You might have heard it, on that day,  
O'er Salamis and Megara ;  
(We have heard the hearers say,)  
Even unto Piræus' bay.

## XXV

From the point of encountering blades to the hilt,  
Sabres and swords with blood were gilt ;  
But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,  
And all but the after carnage done.  
Shriller shrieks now mingling come  
From within the plunder'd dome :  
Hark to the haste of flying feet,  
That splash in the blood of the slippery street ;  
But here and there, where 'vantage ground  
Against the foe may still be found,  
Desperate groups, of twelve or ten,  
Make a pause, and turn again—  
With banded backs against the wall,  
Fiercely stand, or fighting fall.

There stood an old man—his hairs were white,  
But his veteran arm was full of might :  
So gallantly bore he the brunt of the fray,  
The dead before him, on that day,  
In a semicircle lay ;  
Still he combated unwounded,  
Though retreating, unsurrounded.  
Many a scar of former fight  
Lurk'd beneath his corslet bright ;  
But of every wound his body bore,  
Each and all had been ta'en before :  
Though aged, he was so iron of limb,  
Few of our youth could cope with him,  
And the foes, whom he singly kept at bay,  
Outnumber'd his thin hairs of silver grey.



From right to left his sabre swept ;  
 Many an Othman mother wept  
 Sons that were unborn, when dipp'd  
 His weapon first in Moslem gore,  
 Ere his years could count a score. 800  
 Of all he might have been the siro  
 Who fell that day beneath his ire :  
 For, sonless left long years ago,  
 His wrath made many a childless foe ;  
 And since the day, when in the strait  
 His only boy had met his fate,  
 His parent's iron hand did doom  
 More than a human hecatomb.  
 If shades by carnage be appeased,  
 Patroclus' spirit less was pleased 810  
 Than his, Minotti's son, who died  
 Where Asia's bounds and ours divide.  
 Buried he lay, where thousands before  
 For thousands of years were inhumed on the shore ;  
 What of them is left, to tell  
 Where they lie, and how they fell ?  
 Not a stone on their turf, nor a bone in their graves ;  
 But they live in the verse that immortally saves.

## XXVI

Hark to the Allah shout ! a band  
 Of the Mussulman bravest and best is at hand ; 820  
 Their leader's nervous arm is bare,  
 Swifter to smite, and never to spare—  
 Unclothed to the shoulder it waves them on ;  
 Thus in the fight is he ever known :  
 Others a gaudier garb may show,  
 To tempt the spoil of the greedy foe ;  
 Many a hand's on a richer hilt,  
 But none on a steel more ruddily gilt ;  
 Many a loftier turban may wear,—  
 Alp is but known by the white arm bare ; 830  
 Look through the thick of the fight, 'tis there !  
 There is not a standard on that shore



So well advanced the ranks before ;  
 There is not a banner in Moslem war  
 Will lure the Delhis half so far ;  
 It glances like a falling star !  
 Where'er that mighty arm is seen,  
 The bravest be, or late have been ;  
 There the craven cries for quarter  
 Vainly to the vengeful Tartar ;  
 Or the hero, silent lying,  
 Scorns to yield a groan in dying ;  
 Mustering his last feeble blow  
 'Gainst the nearest levell'd foe,  
 Though faint beneath the mutual wound,  
 Grappling on the gory ground.

840

## XXVII

Still the old man stood erect,  
 And Alp's career a moment check'd.  
 'Yield thee, Minotti ; quarter take,  
 For thine own, thy daughter's sake.'

850

'Never, renegado, never !  
 Though the life of thy gift would last for ever.'

'Francesca !—Oh, my promised bride !  
 Must she too perish by thy pride ?'

'She is safe.'—'Where ? where ?'—'In heaven ;  
 From whence thy traitor soul is driven—  
 Far from thee, and undefiled.'

Grimly then Minotti smiled,  
 As he saw Alp staggering bow  
 Before his words, as with a blow.

860

'Oh God ! when died she ?'—'Yesternight—  
 Nor weep I for her spirit's flight :  
 None of my pure race shall be  
 Slaves to Mahomet and thee—  
 Come on !'—That challenge is in vain—  
 Alp's already with the slain !

While Minotti's words were wreaking  
More revenge in bitter speaking  
Than his falchion's point had found,  
Had the time allow'd to wound,  
From within the neighbouring porch  
Of a long defended church,  
Where the last and desperate few  
Would the failing fight renew,  
The sharp shot dash'd Alp to the ground ;  
Ere an eye could view the wound  
That crash'd through the brain of the infidel,  
Round he spun, and down he fell ;  
A flash like fire within his eyes  
Blazed, as he bent no more to rise,  
And then eternal darkness sunk  
Through all the palpitating trunk ;  
Nought of life left, save a quivering  
Where his limbs were slightly shivering :  
They turn'd him on his back ; his breast  
And brow were stain'd with gore and dust,  
And through his lips the life-blood oozed,  
From its deep veins lately loosed :  
But in his pulse there was no throb,  
Nor on his lips one dying sob ;  
Sigh, nor word, nor struggling breath  
Heralded his way to death ;  
Ere his very thought could pray,  
Unanel'd he pass'd away,  
Without a hope from mercy's aid,—  
To the last a Renegade.

870

880

890

## XXVIII

Fearfully the yell arose  
Of his followers, and his foes ;  
These in joy, in fury those :  
Then again in conflict mixing,  
Clashing swords, and spears transfixing,  
Interchanged the blow and thrust,  
Hurling warriors in the dust.

900

Street by street, and foot by foot,  
Still Minotti dares dispute  
The latest portion of the land  
Left beneath his high command ;  
With him, aiding heart and hand,  
The remnant of his gallant band.  
Still the church is tenable,

910

Whence issued late the fated ball  
That half avenged the city's fall,  
When Alp, her fierce assailant, fell :  
Thither bending sternly back,  
They leave before a bloody track ;  
And, with their faces to the foe,  
Dealing wounds with every blow,  
The chief, and his retreating train,  
Join to those within the fane ;  
There they yet may breathe awhile,  
Shelter'd by the massy pile.

920

## XXIX

Brief breathing-time ! the turban'd host,  
With added ranks and raging boast,  
Press onwards with such strength and heat,  
Their numbers balk their own retreat ;  
For narrow the way that led to the spot  
Where still the Christians yielded not ;  
And the foremost, if fearful, may vainly try  
Through the massy column to turn and fly ;  
They perforce must do or die.  
They die ; but ere their eyes could close,  
Avengers o'er their bodies rose ;  
Fresh and furious, fast they fill  
The ranks unthinn'd, though slaughter'd still ;  
And faint the weary Christians wax  
Before the still renew'd attacks :  
And now the Othmans gain the gate ;  
Still resists its iron weight,  
And still, all deadly aim'd and hot,  
From every crevice comes the shot ;

930

940



From every shatter'd window pour  
 The volleys of the sulphurous shower :  
 But the portal wavering grows and weak—  
 The iron yields, the hinges creak—  
 It bends—it falls—and all is o'er ;  
 Lost Corinth may resist no more !

## XXX

Darkly, sternly, and all alone,  
 Minotti stood o'er the altar-stone :  
 ' Madonna's face upon him shone,  
 Painted in heavenly hues above, 950  
 With eyes of light and looks of love ;  
 And placed upon that holy shrine  
 To fix our thoughts on things divine,  
 When pictured there, we kneeling see  
 Her, and the boy-God on her knee,  
 Smiling sweetly on each prayer  
 To heaven, as if to waft it there.  
 Still she smiled ; even now she smiles,  
 Though slaughter streams along her aisles :  
 Minotti lifted his aged eye, 960  
 And made the sign of a cross with a sigh,  
 Then seized a torch which blazed thereby ;  
 And still he stood, while with steel and flame,  
 Inward and onward the Mussulman came.

## XXXI

The vaults beneath the mosaic stone  
 Contain'd the dead of ages gone ;  
 Their names were on the graven floor,  
 But now illegible with gore ;  
 The carved crests, and curious hues  
 The varied marble's vein diffuse, 970  
 Were smear'd, and slippery,—stain'd, and strown  
 With broken swords, and helms o'erthrown :  
 There were dead above, and the dead below  
 Lay cold in many a coffin'd row ;

You might see them piled in sable state,  
 By a pale light through a gloomy grate;  
 But War had enter'd their dark caves,  
 And stored along the vaulted graves  
 Her sulphurous treasures, thickly spread  
 In masses by the fleshless dead:

980

Here, throughout the siege, had been  
 The Christians' chiefest magazine;  
 To these a late form'd train now led,  
 Minotti's last and stern resource  
 Against the foe's o'erwhelming force.

## XXXII

The foe came on, and few remain  
 To strive, and those must strive in vain:  
 For lack of further lives, to slake  
 The thirst of vengeance now awake,  
 With barbarous blows they gash the dead,  
 And lop the already lifeless head,  
 And fell the statues from their niche,  
 And spoil the shrines of offerings rich,  
 And from each other's rude hands wrest  
 The silver vessels saints had bless'd.  
 To the high altar on they go;  
 Oh, but it made a glorious show!  
 On its table still behold

990

The cup of consecrated gold;  
 Massy and deep, a glittering prize,  
 Brightly it sparkles to plunderers' eyes:  
 That morn it held the holy wine,  
 Converted by Christ to his blood so divine,  
 Which his worshippers drank at the break of  
 day,

1000

To shrive their souls ere they join'd in the fray.  
 Still a few drops within it lay:  
 And round the sacred table glow  
 Twelve lofty lamps, in splendid row,  
 From the purest metal cast;  
 A spoil—the richest, and the last.

1010



## XXXIII

So near they came, the nearest stretch'd  
To grasp the spoil he almost reach'd,

When old Minotti's hand  
Touch'd with the torch the train—

'Tis fired !

Spire, vaults, the shrine, the spoil, the slain,

The turban'd victors, the Christian band,

All that of living or dead remain,

Hurl'd on high with the shiver'd fane,

In one wild roar expired !

1020

The shatter'd town—the walls thrown down—

The waves a moment backward bent—

The hills that shake, although unrent,

As if an earthquake pass'd—

The thousand shapeless things all driven

In cloud and flame athwart the heaven,

By that tremendous blast—

Proclaim'd the desperate conflict o'er

On that too long afflicted shore :

Up to the sky like rockets go

1030

All that mingled there below :

Many a tall and goodly man,

Scorch'd and shrivell'd to a span,

When he fell to earth again

Like a cinder strew'd the plain :

Down the ashes shower like rain ;

Some fell in the gulf, which received the sprinkles

With a thousand circling wrinkles ;

Some fell on the shore, but, far away,

Scatter'd o'er the isthmus lay ;

1040

Christian or Moslem, which be they ?

Let their mothers see and say !

When in cradled rest they lay,

And each nursing mother smiled

On the sweet sleep of her child,

Little deem'd she such a day

Would rend those tender limbs away.

Not the matrons that them bore

Could discern their offspring more ;



That one moment left no trace  
More of human form or face  
Save a scatter'd scalp or bone :  
And down came blazing rafters, strown  
Around, and many a falling stone,  
Deeply dented in the clay,  
All blacken'd there and reeking lay.  
All the living things that heard  
That deadly earth-shock disappear'd :  
The wild birds flew ; the wild dogs fled,  
And howling left the unburied dead ;  
The camels from their keepers broke ;  
The distant steer forsook the yoke—  
The nearer steed plunged o'er the plain,  
And burst his girth, and tore his rein ;  
The bull-frog's note, from out the marsh,  
Deep-mouth'd arose, and doubly harsh ;  
The wolves yell'd on the cavern'd hill  
Where echo roll'd in thunder still ;  
The jackal's troop, in gather'd cry,  
Bay'd from afar complainingly,  
With a mix'd and mournful sound,  
Like crying babe, and beaten hound :  
With sudden wing, and ruffled breast,  
The eagle left his rocky nest,  
And mounted nearer to the sun,  
The clouds beneath him seem'd so dun ;  
Their smoke assail'd his startled beak,  
And made him higher soar and shriek—  
Thus was Corinth lost and won !

✓  
SONNET ON CHILLON

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind !  
 Brightest in dungeons, Liberty ! thou art :  
 For there thy habitation is the heart—  
 The heart which love of thee alone can bind ;  
 And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—  
 To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,  
 Their country conquers with their martyrdom,  
 And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.  
 Chillon ! thy prison is a holy place,  
 And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,  
 Until his very steps have left a trace  
 Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,  
 By Bonnivard ! May none those marks efface !  
 For they appeal from tyranny to God.

## THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

### I

My hair is grey, but not with years,  
 Nor grew it white  
 In a single night,  
 As men's have grown from sudden fears :  
 My limbs are bow'd, though not with toil,  
 But rusted with a vile repose,  
 For they have been a dungeon's spoil,  
 And mine has been the fate of those  
 To whom the goodly earth and air  
 Are bann'd, and barr'd—forbidden fare :  
 But this was for my father's faith  
 I suffer'd chains and courted death ;  
 That father perish'd at the stake  
 For tenets he would not forsake ;  
 And for the same his lineal race  
 In darkness found a dwelling place ;

We were seven—who now are one,  
Six in youth, and one in age,  
Finish'd as they had begun,  
Proud of Persecution's rage ;  
One in fire, and two in field,  
Their belief with blood have seal'd,  
Dying as their father died,  
For the God their foes denied ;  
Three were in a dungeon cast,  
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

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## II

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould,  
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,  
There are seven columns, massy and grey,  
Dim with a dull imprison'd ray,  
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,  
And through the crevice and the cleft  
Of the thick wall is fallen and left ;  
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,  
Like a marsh's meteor lamp :  
And in each pillar there is a ring,  
And in each ring there is a chain ;  
That iron is a cankering thing,  
For in these limbs its teeth remain,  
With marks that will not wear away,  
Till I have done with this new day,  
Which now is painful to these eyes,  
Which have not seen the sun so rise  
For years—I cannot count them o'er,  
I lost their long and heavy score  
When my last brother droop'd and died,  
And I lay living by his side.

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## III

They chain'd us each to a column stone,  
And we were three—yet, each alone ;  
We could not move a single pace,  
We could not see each other's face,  
But with that pale and livid light  
That made us strangers in our sight :

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And thus together—yet apart,  
 Fetter'd in hand, but join'd in heart,  
 'Twas still some solace in the dearth  
 Of the pure elements of earth,  
 To hearken to each other's speech,  
 And each turn comforter to each  
 With some new hope, or legend old,  
 Or song heroically bold ;  
 But even these at length grew cold.  
 Our voices took a dreary tone,  
 An echo of the dungeon stone,  
     A grating sound, not full and free,  
     As they of yore were wont to be :  
     It might be fancy—but to me  
 They never sounded like our own.

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## IV

I was the eldest of the three,  
     And to uphold and cheer the rest  
     I ought to do—and did my best—  
 And each did well in his degree.  
 The youngest, whom my father loved,  
 Because our mother's brow was given  
 To him, with eyes as blue as heaven—  
     For him my soul was sorely moved ;  
 And truly might it be distressed  
 To see such bird in such a nest ;  
 For he was beautiful as day—  
     (When day was beautiful to me  
     As to young eagles, being free)—  
     A polar day, which will not see  
 A sunset till its summer's gone,  
     Its sleepless summer of long light,  
 The snow-clad offspring of the sun :  
     And thus he was as pure and bright,  
 And in his natural spirit gay,  
 With tears for nought but others' ills,  
 And then they flow'd like mountain rills,  
 Unless he could assuage the woe  
 Which he abhorr'd to view below.

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## V

The other was as pure of mind,  
 But form'd to combat with his kind ;  
 Strong in his frame, and of a mood  
 Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,  
 And perish'd in the foremost rank

With joy :—but not in chains to pine :  
 His spirit wither'd with their clank,

I saw it silently decline—

And so perchance in sooth did mine : 100  
 But yet I forced it on to cheer  
 Those relics of a home so dear.  
 He was a hunter of the hills,

Had follow'd there the deer and wolf ;  
 To him this dungeon was a gulf,  
 And fetter'd feet the worst of ills.

## VI

Lake Lemman lies by Chillon's walls :  
 A thousand feet in depth below  
 Its massy waters meet and flow ;  
 Thus much the fathom-line was sent 110  
 From Chillon's snow-white battlement,

Which round about the wave inthrals :  
 A double dungeon wall and wave  
 Have made—and like a living grave.  
 Below the surface of the lake

The dark vault lies wherein we lay,  
 We heard it ripple night and day ;

Sounding o'er our heads it knock'd ;  
 And I have felt the winter's spray  
 Wash through the bars when winds were high 121  
 And wanton in the happy sky ;

And then the very rock hath rock'd,  
 And I have felt it shake, unshock'd,  
 Because I could have smiled to see  
 The death that would have set me free.

## VII

I said my nearer brother pined,  
 I said his mighty heart declined,  
 He loathed and put away his food ;  
 It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,  
 For we were used to hunter's fare,  
 And for the like had little care : 130  
 The milk drawn from the mountain goat  
 Was changed for water from the moat, ✓  
 Our bread was such as captives' tears  
 Have moisten'd many a thousand years,  
 Since man first pent his fellow men  
 Like brutes within an iron den ;  
 But what were these to us or him ?  
 These wasted not his heart or limb ;  
 My brother's soul was of that mould 140  
 Which in a palace had grown cold,  
 Had his free breathing been denied  
 The range of the steep mountain's side ;  
 But why delay the truth ?—he died.  
 I saw, and could not hold his head,  
 Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,—  
 Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,  
 To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.  
 He died, and they unlock'd his chain,  
 And scoop'd for him a shallow grave 150  
 Even from the cold earth of our cave.  
 I begg'd them, as a boon, to lay  
 His corse in dust whereon the day  
 Might shine—it was a foolish thought,  
 But then within my brain it wrought,  
 That even in death his freeborn breast  
 In such a dungeon could not rest.  
 I might have spared my idle prayer—  
 They coldly laugh'd, and laid him there :  
 The flat and turfless earth above 160  
 The being we so much did love ;  
 His empty chain above it leant,  
 Such murder's fitting monument !



## VIII

But he, the favourite and the flower,  
Most cherish'd since his natal hour,  
His mother's image in fair face,  
The infant love of all his race,  
His martyr'd father's dearest thought,  
My latest care, for whom I sought  
To hoard my life, that his might be 170  
Less wretched now, and one day free ;  
He, too, who yet had held untired  
A spirit natural or inspired—  
He, too, was struck, and day by day  
Was wither'd on the stalk away.  
Oh, God ! it is a fearful thing  
To see the human soul take wing  
In any shape, in any mood :  
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,  
I've seen it on the breaking ocean 180  
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,  
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed  
Of Sin delirious with its dread ;  
But these were horrors—this was woe  
Unmix'd with such—but sure and slow :  
He faded, and so calm and meek,  
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,  
So tearless, yet so tender—kind,  
And grieved for those he left behind ;  
With all the while a cheek whose bloom 190  
Was as a mockery of the tomb,  
Whose tints as gently sunk away  
As a departing rainbow's ray ;  
An eye of most transparent light,  
That almost made the dungeon bright,  
And not a word of murmur—not  
A groan o'er his untimely lot,—  
A little talk of better days,  
A little hope my own to raise,  
For I was sunk in silence—lost 200  
In this last loss, of all the most ;

And then the sighs he would suppress  
 Of fainting nature's feebleness,  
 More slowly drawn, grew less and less :  
 I listen'd, but I could not hear ;  
 I call'd, for I was wild with fear ;  
 I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread  
 Would not be thus admonishéd ;  
 I call'd, and thought I heard a sound—  
 I burst my chain with one strong bound,  
 And rush'd to him :—I found him not,  
 I only stirr'd in this black spot,  
 I only lived, I only drew  
 The accursed breath of dungeon-dew ;  
 The last, the sole, the dearest link  
 Between me and the eternal brink,  
 Which bound me to my failing race,  
 Was broken in this fatal place.  
 One on the earth, and one beneath—  
 My brothers—both had ceased to breathe : 220  
 I took that hand which lay so still,  
 Alas ! my own was full as chill ;  
 I had not strength to stir, or strive,  
 But felt that I was still alive—  
 A frantic feeling, when we know  
 That what we love shall ne'er be so.  
     I know not why  
     I could not die,  
 I had no earthly hope but—faith,  
 And that forbade a selfish death. 230

## IX

What next befell me then and there  
 I know not well—I never knew—  
 First came the loss of light, and air,  
 And then of darkness too :  
 I had no thought, no feeling—none—  
 Among the stones I stood a stone,  
 And was, scarce conscious what I wist,  
 As shrubless crags within the mist ;

For all was blank, and bleak, and grey ;  
It was not night—it was not day ; 240  
It was not even the dungeon-light,  
So hateful to my heavy sight,  
But vacancy absorbing space,  
And fixedness—without a place ;  
There were no stars—no earth—no time,  
No check—no change—no good—no crime,  
But silence, and a stirless breath  
Which neither was of life nor death ;  
A sea of stagnant idleness,  
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless ! 250

## X

A light broke in upon my brain,—  
It was the carol of a bird ;  
It ceased, and then it came again,  
The sweetest song ear ever heard,  
And mine was thankful till my eyes  
Ran over with the glad surprise,  
And they that moment could not see  
I was the mate of misery ;  
But then by dull degrees came back  
My senses to their wonted track ; 260  
I saw the dungeon walls and floor  
Close slowly round me as before,  
I saw the glimmer of the sun  
Creeping as it before had done,  
But through the crevice where it came  
That bird was perch'd, as fond and tame,  
And tamer than upon the tree ;  
A lovely bird, with azure wings,  
And song that said a thousand things,  
And seem'd to say them all for me ! 270  
I never saw its like before,  
I ne'er shall see its likeness more :  
It seem'd like me to want a mate,  
But was not half so desolate,  
And it was come to love me when  
None lived to love me so again,



And cheering from my dungeon's brink,  
 Had brought me back to feel and think.  
 I know not if it late were free,  
 Or broke its cage to perch on mine, 280  
 But knowing well captivity,  
 Sweet bird ! I could not wish for thine !  
 Or if it were, in wingèd guise,  
 A visitant from Paradise ;  
 For—Heaven forgive that thought ! the while  
 Which made me both to weep and smile—  
 I sometimes deem'd that it might be  
 My brother's soul come down to me ;  
 But then at last away it flew,  
 And then 'twas mortal well I knew, 290  
 For he would never thus have flown,  
 And left me twice so doubly lone,  
 Lone—as the corse within its shroud,  
 Lone—as a solitary cloud,  
 A single cloud on a sunny day,  
 While all the rest of heaven is clear,  
 A frown upon the atmosphere,  
 That hath no business to appear  
 When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

## XI

A kind of change came in my fate, 300  
 My keepers grew compassionate ;  
 I know not what had made them so,  
 They were inured to sights of woe,  
 But so it was :—my broken chain  
 With links unfasten'd did remain,  
 And it was liberty to stride  
 Along my cell from side to side,  
 And up and down, and then athwart,  
 And tread it over every part ;  
 And round the pillars one by one, 310  
 Returning where my walk begun,  
 Avoiding only, as I trod,  
 My brothers' graves without a sod ;

For if I thought with heedless tread  
My step profaned their lowly bed,  
My breath came gaspingly and thick,  
And my crush'd heart fell blind and sick.

## XII

I made a footing in the wall,  
It was not therefrom to escape,  
For I had buried one and all, 320  
Who loved me in a human shape ;  
And the whole earth would henceforth be  
A wider prison unto me :  
No child—no sire—no kin had I,  
No partner in my misery ;  
I thought of this, and I was glad,  
For thought of them had made me mad ;  
But I was curious to ascend  
To my barr'd windows, and to bend  
Once more, upon the mountains high, 330  
The quiet of a loving eye.

## XIII

I saw them—and they were the same,  
They were not changed like me in frame ;  
I saw their thousand years of snow  
On high—their wide long lake below,  
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow ;  
I heard the torrents leap and gush  
O'er channell'd rock and broken bush ;  
I saw the white-wall'd distant town,  
And whiter sails go skimming down ; 340  
And then there was a little isle,  
Which in my very face did smile,  
The only one in view ;  
A small green isle, it seem'd no more,  
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,  
But in it there were three tall trees,  
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,

And by it there were waters flowing,  
 And on it there were young flowers growing,  
     Of gentle breath and hue.  
 The fish swam by the castle wall,  
 And they seem'd joyous each and all;  
 The eagle rode the rising blast,  
 Methought he never flew so fast  
 As then to me he seem'd to fly;  
 And then new tears came in my eye,  
 And I felt troubled—and would fain  
 I had not left my recent chain.  
 And when I did descend again,  
 The darkness of my dim abode  
 Fell on me as a heavy load;  
 It was as is a new-dug grave,  
 Closing o'er one we sought to save,—  
 And yet my glance, too much opprest,  
 Had almost need of such a rest.

350

360

## XIV

It might be months, or years, or days,  
 I kept no count, I took no note,  
 I had no hope my eyes to raise,  
     And clear them of their dreary mote;  
 At last men came to set me free;  
 I ask'd not why, and reck'd not where;  
 It was at length the same to me,  
 Fetter'd or fetterless to be,  
     I learn'd to love despair.  
 And thus when they appear'd at last,  
 And all my bonds aside were cast,  
 These heavy walls to me had grown  
 A hermitage—and all my own!  
 And half I felt as they were come  
 To tear me from a second home:  
 With spiders I had friendship made,  
 And watch'd them in their sullen trade,  
 Had seen the mice by moonlight play,  
 And why should I feel less than they?

370

380



We were all inmates of one place,  
And I, the monarch of each race,  
Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell !  
In quiet we had learn'd to dwell ;  
My very chains and I grew friends,  
So much a long communion tends  
To make us what we are :—even I  
Regain'd my freedom with a sigh.

390

## MAZEPPA

## I

'Twas after dread Pultowa's day,  
 When fortune left the royal Swede,  
 Around a slaughter'd army lay,  
 No more to combat and to bleed.  
 The power and glory of the war,  
 Faithless as their vain votaries, men,  
 Had pass'd to the triumphant Czar,  
 And Moscow's walls were safe again,  
 Until a day more dark and drear,  
 And a more memorable year,  
 Should give to slaughter and to shame  
 A mightier host and haughtier name ;  
 A greater wreck, a deeper fall,  
 A shock to one—a thunderbolt to all.

10

## II

Such was the hazard of the die ;  
 The wounded Charles was taught to fly  
 By day and night through field and flood,  
 Stain'd with his own and subjects' blood ;  
 For thousands fell that flight to aid :  
 And not a voice was heard t' upbraid  
 Ambition in his humbled hour,  
 When truth had nought to dread from power.  
 His horse was slain, and Gieta gave  
 His own—and died the Russians' slave.  
 This too sinks after many a league  
 Of well sustained, but vain fatigue ;  
 And in the depth of forests, darkling  
 The watch-fires in the distance sparkling—  
 The beacons of surrounding foes—  
 A king must lay his limbs at length.  
 Are these the laurels and repose  
 For which the nations strain their strength ?

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They laid him by a savage tree,  
 In outworn nature's agony ;  
 His wounds were stiff, his limbs were stark ;  
 The heavy hour was chill and dark ;  
 The fever in his blood forbade  
 A transient slumber's fitful aid :  
 And thus it was ; but yet through all,  
 Kinglike the monarch bore his fall, 40  
 And made, in this extreme of ill,  
 His pangs the vassals of his will :  
 All silent and subdued were they,  
 As once the nations round him lay.

## III

A band of chiefs !—alas ! how few,  
 Since but the fleeting of a day  
 Had thinn'd it ; but this wreck was true  
 And chivalrous : upon the clay  
 Each sate him down, all sad and mute,  
 Beside his monarch and his steed ; 50  
 For danger levels man and brute,  
 And all are fellows in their need.  
 Among the rest, Mazeppa made  
 His pillow in an old oak's shade—  
 Himself as rough, and scarce less old,  
 The Ukraine's Hetman, calm and bold ;  
 But first, outspent with this long course,  
 The Cossack prince rubb'd down his horse,  
 And made for him a leafy bed,  
 And smooth'd his fetlocks and his mane, 60  
 And slack'd his girth, and stripp'd his rein,  
 And joy'd to see how well he fed ;  
 For until now he had the dread  
 His wearied courser might refuse  
 To browse beneath the midnight dews :  
 But he was hardy as his lord,  
 And little cared for bed and board ;  
 But spirited and docile too.  
 Whate'er was to be done, would do.



Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb,  
All Tartar-like he carried him ;  
Obey'd his voice, and came to call,  
And knew him in the midst of all :  
Though thousands were around,—and Night,  
Without a star, pursued her flight,—  
That steed from sunset until dawn  
His chief would follow like a fawn. 70

## IV

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,  
And laid his lance beneath his oak,  
Felt if his arms in order good  
The long day's march had well withstood—  
If still the powder fill'd the pan, 80  
And flints unloosen'd kept their lock—  
His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,  
And whether they had chafed his belt ;  
And next the venerable man,  
From out his havresack and can,  
Prepared and spread his slender stock ;  
And to the monarch and his men  
The whole or portion offer'd then 90  
With far less of inquietude  
Than courtiers at a banquet would.  
And Charles of this his slender share  
With smiles partook a moment there,  
To force of cheer a greater show,  
And seem above both wounds and woe ;  
And then he said—" Of all our band,  
Though firm of heart and strong of hand,  
In skirmish, march, or forage, none  
Can less have said or more have done 100  
Than thee, Mazeppa ! On the earth  
So fit a pair had never birth,  
Since Alexander's days till now,  
As thy Bucephalus and thou :  
All Scythia's fame to thine should yield  
For pricking on o'er flood and field."

Mazeppa answer'd—" Ill betide  
The school wherein I learn'd to ride ! "  
Quoth Charles—" Old Hetman, wherefore so,  
Since thou hast learn'd the art so well ? " 110

Mazeppa said—" 'Twere long to tell ;  
And we have many a league to go,  
With every now and then a blow,  
And ten to one at least the foe,  
Before our steeds may graze at ease  
Beyond the swift Borysthenes :  
And, Sire, your limbs have need of rest,  
And I will be the sentinel

Of this your troop."—" But I request,"

Said Sweden's monarch, " thou wilt tell 120  
This tale of thine, and I may reap,  
Perchance, from this the boon of sleep ;  
For at this moment from my eyes  
The hope of present slumber flies."

" Well, Sire, with such a hope, I'll track  
My seventy years of memory back :

I think 'twas in my twentieth spring,—

Aye 'twas,—when Casimir was king—

John Casimir,—I was his page

Six summers, in my earlier age : 130

A learned monarch, faith ! was he,

And most unlike your majesty ;

He made no wars, and did not gain

New realms to lose them back again ;

And (save debates in Warsaw's diet)

He reign'd in most unseemly quiet ;

Not that he had no cares to vex ;

He loved the muses and the sex ;

And sometimes these so froward are,

They made him wish himself at war ; 140

But soon his wrath being o'er, he took

Another mistress, or new book :

And then he gave prodigious fêtes—

All Warsaw gather'd round his gates

To gaze upon his splendid court,

And dames, and chiefs, of princely port.

He was the Polish Solomon,  
 So sung his poets, all but one,  
 Who, being unpension'd, made a satire,  
 And boasted that he could not flatter. 150

It was a court of jousts and mimes,  
 Where every courtier tried at rhymes ;  
 Even I for once produced some verses,  
 And signed my odes ' Despairing Thyrsis.'  
 There was a certain Palatine,

A count of far and high descent,  
 Rich as a salt or silver mine ;  
 And he was proud, ye may divine,

As if from heaven he had been sent :  
 He had such wealth in blood and ore 160

As few could match beneath the throne ;  
 And he would gaze upon his store,  
 And o'er his pedigree would pore,  
 Until by some confusion led,  
 Which almost look'd like want of head,

He thought their merits were his own.  
 His wife was not of his opinion ;

His junior she by thirty years,  
 Grew daily tired of his dominion ;

And, after wishes, hopes, and fears, 170  
 To virtue a few farewell tears,

A restless dream or two, some glances  
 At Warsaw's youth, some songs, and dances,  
 Awaited but the usual chances,  
 Those happy accidents which render  
 The coldest dames so very tender,  
 To deck her Count with titles given,  
 'Tis said, as passports into heaven ;  
 But, strange to say, they rarely boast  
 Of these, who have deserved them most. 180

## v

" I was a goodly stripling then ;  
 At seventy years I so may say,  
 That there were few, or boys or men,  
 Who, in my dawning time of day,



Of vassal or of knight's degree,  
Could vie in vanities with me ;  
For I had strength, youth, gaiety,  
A port, not like to this ye see,  
But smooth, as all is rugged now ;

For time, and care, and war, have plough'd 190  
My very soul from out my brow ;

And thus I should be disavow'd  
By all my kind and kin, could they  
Compare my day and yesterday ;  
This change was wrought, too, long ere age  
Had ta'en my features for his page ;  
With years, ye know, have not declined  
My strength, my courage, or my mind,  
Or at this hour I should not be  
Telling old tales beneath a tree, 200  
With starless skies my canopy.

But let me on : Theresa's form—  
Methinks it glides before me now,  
Between me and yon chestnut's bough,

The memory is so quick and warm ;  
And yet I find no words to tell  
The shape of her I loved so well :  
She had the Asiatic eye,

Such as our Turkish neighbourhood 210  
Hath mingled with our Polish blood,  
Dark as above us is the sky ;

But through it stole a tender light,  
Like the first moonrise of midnight ;  
Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,  
Which seem'd to melt to its own beam ;  
All love, half languor, and half fire,  
Like saints that at the stake expire,  
And lift their raptured looks on high,  
As though it were a joy to die.

A brow like a midsummer lake, 220

Transparent with the sun therein,  
When waves no murmur dare to make,

And heaven beholds her face within,  
A cheek and lip—but why proceed ?

I loved her then, I love her still ;  
 And such as I am, love indeed  
 In fierce extremes—in good and ill.  
 But still we love even in our rage,  
 And haunted to our very age  
 With the vain shadow of the past,  
 As is Mazeppa to the last.

230

## VI

“ We met—we gazed—I saw, and sigh’d ;  
 She did not speak, and yet replied ;  
 There are ten thousand tones and signs  
 We hear and see, but none defines—  
 Involuntary sparks of thought,  
 Which strike from out the heart o’erwrought,  
 And form a strange intelligence,  
 Alike mysterious and intense,  
 Which link the burning chain that binds,  
 Without their will, young hearts and minds :  
 Conveying, as the electric wire,  
 We know not how, the absorbing fire.  
 I saw, and sigh’d—in silence wept,  
 And still reluctant distance kept,  
 Until I was made known to her,  
 And we might then and there confer  
 Without suspicion—then, even then,  
 I long’d, and was resolved to speak ;  
 But on my lips they died again,  
 The accents tremulous and weak,  
 Until one hour.—There is a game,  
 A frivolous and foolish play,  
 Wherewith we while away the day ;  
 It is—I have forgot the name—  
 And we to this, it seems, were set,  
 By some strange chance, which I forget :  
 I reck’d not if I won or lost,  
 It was enough for me to be  
 So near to hear, and oh ! to see  
 The being whom I loved the most.

240

250

260

I watch'd her as a sentinel,  
(May ours this dark night watch as well !)

Until I saw, and thus it was,  
That she was pensive, nor perceived  
Her occupation, nor was grieved  
Nor glad to lose or gain ; but still  
Play'd on for hours, as if her will  
Yet bound her to the place, though not  
That hers might be the winning lot.

270

Then through my brain the thought did pass  
Even as a flash of lightning there,  
That there was something in her air  
Which would not doom me to despair ;  
And on the thought my words broke forth,

All incoherent as they were ;  
Their eloquence was little worth,  
But yet she listen'd—'tis enough—  
Who listens once will listen twice ;  
Her heart, be sure, is not of ice,  
And one refusal no rebuff.

280

## VII

“ I loved, and was beloved again—  
They tell me, Sire, you never knew  
Those gentle frailties ; if 'tis true,  
I shorten all my joy or pain ;  
To you 'twould seem absurd as vain ;  
But all men are not born to reign,  
Or o'er their passions, or as you  
Thus o'er themselves and nations too.  
I am—or rather *was*—a prince,

290

A chief of thousands, and could lead  
Them on where each would foremost bleed ;  
But could not o'er myself evince  
The like control—But to resume :

I loved, and was beloved again ;  
In sooth, it is a happy doom,  
But yet where happiest ends in pain.  
We met in secret, and the hour  
Which led me to that lady's bower



Was fiery Expectation's dower. 300  
 My days and nights were nothing—all  
 Except that hour which doth recall,  
 In the long lapse from youth to age,  
     No other like itself : I'd give  
     The Ukraine back again to live  
 It o'er once more, and be a page,  
 The happy page, who was the lord  
 Of one soft heart, and his own sword,  
 And had no other gem nor wealth  
 Save nature's gift of youth and health. 310  
 We met in secret—doubly sweet,  
 Some say, they find it so to meet ;  
 I know not that—I would have given  
     My life but to have call'd her mine  
 In the full view of earth and heaven :  
     For I did oft and long repine  
 That we could only meet by stealth.

## VIII

“ For lovers there are many eyes,  
     And such there were on us ; the devil  
     On such occasions should be civil— 320  
 The devil !—I'm loth to do him wrong,  
     It might be some untoward saint,  
 Who would not be at rest too long,  
     But to his pious bile gave vent—  
 But one fair night, some lurking spies  
 Surprised and seized us both.  
 The Count was something more than wroth—  
 I was unarm'd ; but if in steel,  
 All cap-à-pie from head to heel,  
 What 'gainst their numbers could I do ? 330  
 'Twas near his castle, far away  
     From city or from succour near,  
 And almost on the break of day ;  
 I did not think to see another,  
     My moments seem'd reduced to few ;  
 And with one prayer to Mary Mother,  
     And, it may be, a saint or two,

As I resign'd me to my fate,  
They led me to the castle gate :

Theresa's doom I never knew,  
Our lot was henceforth separate.

340

An angry man, ye may opine,  
Was he, the proud Count Palatine ;  
And he had reason good to be,

But he was most enraged lest such

An accident should chance to touch  
Upon his future pedigree ;

Nor less amazed, that such a blot  
His noble 'scutcheon should have got,  
While he was highest of his line ;

350

Because unto himself he seem'd

The first of men, nor less he deem'd  
In others' eyes, and most in mine.  
'Sdeath ! with a *page*—perchance a king  
Had reconciled him to the thing ;  
But with a stripling of a page—  
I felt but cannot paint—his rage.

## IX

“ ‘ Bring forth the horse ! ’—the horse was brought ;

In truth, he was a noble steed,

A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,

360

Who look'd as though the speed of thought  
Were in his limbs ; but he was wild,

Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,  
With spur and bridle undefiled—

'Twas but a day he had been caught ;  
And snorting, with erected mane,

And struggling fiercely, but in vain,  
In the full foam of wrath and dread

To me the desert-born was led :

They bound me on, that menial throng ;

370

Upon his back with many a thong

Then loosed him with a sudden lash—

Away !—away !—and on we dash !

Torrents less rapid and less rash.

## X

“ Away !—away !—My breath was gone,  
I saw not where he hurried on :  
'Twas scarcely yet the break of day,  
And on he foam'd—away !—away !  
The last of human sounds which rose,  
As I was darted from my foes, 380  
Was the wild shout of savage laughter,  
Which on the wind came roaring after  
A moment from that rabble rout :  
With sudden wrath I wrench'd my head,  
And snapp'd the cord, which to the mane  
Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,  
And, writhing half my form about,  
Howl'd back my curse ; but 'midst the tread,  
The thunder of my courser's speed,  
Perchance they did not hear nor heed : 390  
It vexes me—for I would fain  
Have paid their insult back again.  
I paid it well in after days :  
There is not of that castle gate,  
Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight,  
Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left ;  
Nor of its fields a blade of grass,  
Save what grows on a ridge of wall,  
Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall ;  
And many a time ye there might pass, 400  
Nor dream that e'er that fortress was.  
I saw its turrets in a blaze,  
Their crackling battlements all cleft,  
And the hot lead pour down like rain  
From off the scorch'd and blackening roof,  
Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.  
They little thought that day of pain,  
When launch'd, as on the lightning's flash,  
They bade me to destruction dash,  
That one day I should come again, 410  
With twice five thousand horse, to thank  
The Count for his uncourteous ride.



They play'd me then a bitter prank,  
When, with the wild horse for my guide,  
They bound me to his foaming flank :  
At length I play'd them one as frank—  
For time at last sets all things even—  
And if we do but watch the hour,  
There never yet was human power  
Which could evade, if unforgiven,  
The patient search and vigil long  
Of him who treasures up a wrong.

420

## XI

“ Away, away, my steed and I,  
Upon the pinions of the wind,  
All human dwellings left behind ;  
We sped like meteors through the sky,  
When with its crackling sound the night  
Is chequer'd with the northern light :  
Town—village—none were on our track,  
But a wild plain of far extent,  
And bounded by a forest black ;  
And, save the scarce seen battlement  
On distant heights of some strong hold,  
Against the Tartars built of old,  
No trace of man. The year before  
A Turkish army had march'd o'er ;  
And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,  
The verdure flies the bloody sod :  
The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,  
And a low breeze crept moaning by—  
I could have answered with a sigh—  
But fast we fled,—away !—away !—  
And I could neither sigh nor pray ;  
And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain  
Upon the courser's bristling mane ;  
But, snorting still with rage and fear,  
He flew upon his far career :  
At times I almost thought, indeed,  
He must have slacken'd in his speed ;

430

440

But no—my bound and slender frame  
 Was nothing to his angry might, 450  
 And merely like a spur became :  
 Each motion which I made to free  
 My swoln limbs from their agony  
 Increased his fury and affright :  
 I tried my voice,—'twas faint and low,  
 But yet he swerved as from a blow ;  
 And, starting to each accent, sprang  
 As from a sudden trumpet's clang :  
 Meantime my cords were wet with gore, 460  
 Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er ;  
 And in my tongue the thirst became  
 A something fierier far than flame.

## XII

“ We near'd the wild wood—'twas so wide,  
 I saw no bounds on either side ;  
 'Twas studded with old sturdy trees,  
 That bent not to the roughest breeze  
 Which howls down from Siberia's waste,  
 And strips the forest in its haste,—  
 But these were few and far between, 470  
 Set thick with shrubs more young and green,  
 Luxuriant with their annual leaves,  
 Ere strown by those autumnal eves  
 That nip the forest's foliage dead,  
 Discolour'd with a lifeless red,  
 Which stands thereon like stiffen'd gore  
 Upon the slain when battle's o'er,  
 And some long winter's night hath shed  
 Its frost o'er every tombless head.  
 So cold and stark the raven's beak 480  
 May peck unpierced each frozen cheek :  
 'Twas a wild waste of underwood,  
 And here and there a chestnut stood,  
 The strong oak, and the hardy pine :  
 But far apart—and well it were,  
 Or else a different lot were mine—

The boughs gave way, and did not tear  
 My limbs ; and I found strength to bear  
 My wounds, already scarr'd with cold ;  
 My bonds forbade to loose my hold. 490  
 We rustled through the leaves like wind,  
 Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind ;  
 By night I heard them on the track,  
 Their troop came hard upon our back,  
 With their long gallop, which can tire  
 The hound's deep hate, and hunter's fire :  
 Where'er we flew they follow'd on,  
 Nor left us with the morning sun ;  
 Behind I saw them, scarce a rood, 500  
 At day-break winding through the wood,  
 And through the night had heard their feet  
 Their stealing, rustling step repeat.  
 Oh ! how I wish'd for spear or sword,  
 At least to die amidst the horde,  
 And perish—if it must be so—  
 At bay, destroying many a foe !  
 When first my courser's race begun,  
 I wish'd the goal already won ;  
 But now I doubted strength and speed. 510  
 Vain doubt ! his swift and savage breed  
 Had nerved him like the mountain-roe ;  
 Nor faster falls the blinding snow  
 Which whelms the peasant near the door  
 Whose threshold he shall cross no more,  
 Bewilder'd with the dazzling blast,  
 Than through the forest-paths he passed—  
 Untired, untamed, and worse than wild ;  
 All furious as a favour'd child  
 Balk'd of its wish : or fiercer still— 520  
 A woman piqued—who has her will.

## XIII

“ The wood was passed ; ’twas more than noon,  
 But chill the air, although in June ;  
 Or it might be my veins ran cold—  
 Prolong'd endurance tames the bold ;



And I was then not what I seem,  
 But headlong as a wintry stream,  
 And wore my feelings out before  
 I well could count their causes o'er :  
 And what with fury, fear, and wrath,  
 The tortures which beset my path,  
 Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,  
 Thus bound in nature's nakedness ;  
 Sprung from a race whose rising blood,  
 When stirred beyond its calmer mood,  
 And trodden hard upon, is like  
 The rattle-snake's, in act to strike,  
 What marvel if this worn-out trunk  
 Beneath its woes a moment sunk ?  
 The earth gave way, the skies roll'd round,  
 I seem'd to sink upon the ground ;  
 But err'd, for I was fastly bound.  
 My heart turn'd sick, my brain grew sore,  
 And throbb'd awhile, then beat no more :  
 The skies spun like a mighty wheel ;  
 I saw the trees like drunkards reel,  
 And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,  
 Which saw no farther. He who dies  
 Can die no more than then I died.  
 O'ertortured by that ghastly ride,  
 I felt the blackness come and go,  
 And strove to wake ; but could not make  
 My senses climb up from below :  
 I felt as on a plank at sea,  
 When all the waves that dash o'er thee,  
 At the same time upheave and whelm,  
 And hurl thee towards a desert realm.  
 My undulating life was as  
 The fancied lights that flitting pass  
 Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when  
 Fever begins upon the brain ;  
 But soon it pass'd, with little pain,  
 But a confusion worse than such :  
 I own that I should deem it much,  
 Dying, to feel the same again ;

530

540

550

560

And yet I do suppose we must  
Feel far more ere we turn to dust :  
No matter ; I have bared my brow  
Full in Death's face—before—and now.

## XIV

“ My thoughts came back ; where was I ? Cold,  
And numb, and giddy : pulse by pulse 570  
Life reassumed its lingering hold,  
And throb by throb,—till grown a pang  
Which for a moment would convulse,  
My blood reflow'd, though thick and chill ;  
My ear with uncouth noises rang,  
My heart began once more to thrill ;  
My sight return'd, though dim ; alas !  
And thicken'd, as it were, with glass.  
Methought the dash of waves was nigh ;  
There was a gleam too of the sky, 580  
Studded with stars ;—it is no dream ;  
The wild horse swims the wilder stream :  
The bright broad river's gushing tide  
Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,  
And we are half-way, struggling o'er  
To yon unknown and silent shore.  
The waters broke my hollow trance,  
And with a temporary strength  
My stiffen'd limbs were rebaptized.  
My courser's broad breast proudly braves, 590  
And dashes off the ascending waves,  
And onward we advance !  
We reach the slippery shore at length,  
A haven I but little prized,  
For all behind was dark and drear,  
And all before was night and fear.  
How many hours of night or day  
In those suspended pangs I lay,  
I could not tell ; I scarcely knew  
If this were human breath I drew. 600

## XV

“ With glossy skin, and dripping mane,  
 And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,  
 The wild steed’s sinewy nerves still strain  
 Up the repelling bank.

We gain the top : a boundless plain  
 Spreads through the shadow of the night,  
 And onward, onward, onward, seems,  
 Like precipices in our dreams,  
 To stretch beyond the sight ;

And here and there a speck of white,

610

Or scatter’d spot of dusky green,  
 In masses broke into the light,  
 As rose the moon upon my right :

But nought distinctly seen  
 In the dim waste would indicate  
 The omen of a cottage gate ;  
 No twinkling taper from afar  
 Stood like a hospitable star ;  
 Not even an ignis-fatuus rose  
 To make him merry with my woes :

620

That very cheat had cheer’d me then !  
 Although detected, welcome still,  
 Reminding me, through every ill,  
 Of the abodes of men.

## XVI

“ Onward we went—but slack and slow ;  
 His savage force at length o’erspent,  
 The drooping courser, faint and low,  
 All feebly foaming went.

A sickly infant had had power  
 To guide him forward in that hour :

630

But useless all to me :  
 His new-born tameness nought avail’d—  
 My limbs were bound ; my force had fail’d,  
 Perchance, had they been free.



With feeble effort still I tried  
To rend the bonds so starkly tied,  
But still it was in vain ;  
My limbs were only wrung the more,  
And soon the idle strife gave o'er,  
Which but prolong'd their pain :  
The dizzy race seem'd almost done,  
Although no goal was nearly won :  
Some streaks announced the coming sun—  
How slow, alas ! he came !  
Methought that mist of dawning gray  
Would never dapple into day ;  
How heavily it roll'd away—  
Before the eastern flame  
Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,  
And call'd the radiance from their cars,  
And fill'd the earth, from his deep throne,  
With lonely lustre, all his own.

640

650

## XVII

“ Up rose the sun ; the mists were curl'd  
Back from the solitary world  
Which lay around, behind, before.  
What boot'd it to traverse o'er  
Plain, forest, river ? Man nor brute,  
Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,  
Lay in the wild luxuriant soil ;  
No sign of travel, none of toil ;  
The very air was mute ;  
And not an insect's shrill small horn,  
Nor matin bird's new voice was borne  
From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,  
Panting as if his heart would burst,  
The weary brute still stagger'd on ;  
And still we were—or seem'd—alone.  
At length, while reeling on our way,  
Methought I heard a courser neigh,  
From out yon tuft of blackening firs.  
Is it the wind those branches stirs ?

660

670

No, no ! from out the forest prance  
 A trampling troop ; I see them come !  
 In one vast squadron they advance !

I strove to cry—my lips were dumb.  
 The steeds rush on in plunging pride ;  
 But where are they the reins to guide ?  
 A thousand horse, and none to ride !  
 With flowing tail, and flying mane,  
 Wide nostrils never stretch'd by pain,  
 Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,  
 And feet that iron never shod,  
 And flanks unscarr'd by spur or rod,  
 A thousand horse, the wild, the free,  
 Like waves that follow o'er the sea,

680

Came thickly thundering on,  
 As if our faint approach to meet ;  
 The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,  
 A moment staggering, feebly fleet,  
 A moment, with a faint low neigh,  
 He answer'd, and then fell !

690

With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,  
 And reeking limbs immoveable,

His first and last career is done !  
 On came the troop—they saw him stoop,  
 They saw me strangely bound along  
 His back with many a bloody thong :  
 They stop—they start—they snuff the air,  
 Gallop a moment here and there,  
 Approach, retire, wheel round and round,  
 Then plunging back with sudden bound,  
 Headed by one black mighty steed,  
 Who seem'd the patriarch of his breed,

700

Without a single speck or hair  
 Of white upon his shaggy hide ;  
 They snort, they foam, neigh, swerve aside,  
 And backward to the forest fly,  
 By instinct, from a human eye.

They left me there to my despair,  
 Linked to the dead and stiffening wretch,  
 Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,

710

Relieved from that unwonted weight,  
 From whence I could not extricate  
 Nor him nor me—and there we lay,  
     The dying on the dead !  
 I little deem'd another day  
     Would see my houseless, helpless head.

“ And there from morn to twilight bound,  
 I felt the heavy hours toil round,  
 With just enough of life to see  
 My last of suns go down on me,  
 In hopeless certainty of mind,  
 That makes us feel at length resign'd  
 To that which our foreboding years  
 Present the worst and last of fears :  
 Inevitable—even a boon,  
 Nor more unkind for coming soon,  
 Yet shunn'd and dreaded with such care,  
 As if it only were a snare

That prudence might escape :  
 At times both wish'd for and implored,  
 At times sought with self-pointed sword,  
 Yet still a dark and hideous close  
 To even intolerable woes,

And welcome in no shape.  
 And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,  
 They who have revell'd beyond measure  
 In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,  
 Die calm, or calmer, oft than he  
 Whose heritage was misery :  
 For he who hath in turn run through  
 All that was beautiful and new,

Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave ;  
 And, save the future, (which is view'd  
 Not quite as men are base or good,  
 But as their nerves may be endued,)

With nought perhaps to grieve :  
 The wretch still hopes his woes must end,  
 And Death, whom he should deem his friend,



Appears, to his distemper'd eyes,  
 Arrived to rob him of his prize, 750  
 The tree of his new Paradise.  
 To-morrow would have given him all,  
 Repaid his pangs, repair'd his fall ;  
 To-morrow would have been the first  
 Of days no more deplored or curst,  
 But bright, and long, and beckoning years,  
 Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,  
 Guerdon of many a painful hour ;  
 To-morrow would have given him power 760  
 To rule, to shine, to smite, to save—  
 And must it dawn upon his grave ?

## XVIII

“ The sun was sinking—still I lay  
 Chain'd to the chill and stiffening steed ;  
 I thought to mingle there our clay,  
 And my dim eyes of death had need,  
 No hope arose of being freed :  
 I cast my last looks up the sky,  
 And there between me and the sun  
 I saw the expecting raven fly, 770  
 Who scarce would wait till both should die,  
 Ere his repast begun ;  
 He flew, and perch'd, then flew once more,  
 And each time nearer than before ;  
 I saw his wing through twilight flit,  
 And once so near me he alit  
 I could have smote, but lack'd the strength ;  
 But the slight motion of my hand,  
 And feeble scratching of the sand,  
 The exerted throat's faint struggling noise, 780  
 Which scarcely could be called a voice,  
 Together scared him off at length.  
 I know no more—my latest dream  
 Is something of a lovely star  
 Which fix'd my dull eyes from afar,

And went and came with wandering beam,  
 And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense  
 Sensation of recurring sense,  
 And then subsiding back to death,  
 And then again a little breath, 790  
 A little thrill, a short suspense,  
 An icy sickness curdling o'er  
 My heart, and sparks that cross'd my brain—  
 A gasp, a throb, a start of pain,  
 A sigh, and nothing more.

## XIX

"I woke—where was I?—Do I see  
 A human face look down on me?  
 And doth a roof above me close?  
 Do these limbs on a couch repose?  
 Is this a chamber where I lie? 800  
 And is it mortal yon bright eye,  
 That watches me with gentle glance?

I closed my own again once more,  
 As doubtful that my former trance  
 Could not as yet be o'er.

A slender girl, long-hair'd, and tall,  
 Sate watching by the cottage wall;  
 The sparkle of her eye I caught,  
 Even with my first return of thought;  
 For ever and anon she threw 810

A prying, pitying glance on me  
 With her black eyes so wild and free:  
 I gazed, and gazed, until I knew  
 No vision it could be,—

But that I lived, and was released  
 From adding to the vulture's feast:  
 And when the Cossack maid beheld  
 My heavy eyes at length unseal'd,  
 She smiled—and I essay'd to speak,

But fail'd—and she approach'd, and made 820  
 With lip and finger signs that said,  
 I must not strive as yet to break

The silence, till my strength should be  
 Enough to leave my accents free ;  
 And then her hand on mine she laid,  
 And smooth'd the pillow for my head,  
 And stole along on tiptoe tread,

And gently oped the door, and spake  
 In whispers—ne'er was voice so sweet !  
 Even music follow'd her light feet.

830

But those she call'd were not awake,  
 And she went forth ; but, ere she pass'd,  
 Another look on me she cast,

Another sign she made, to say,  
 That I had nought to fear, that all  
 Were near, at my command or call,

And she would not delay  
 Her due return :—while she was gone,  
 Methought I felt too much alone.

## XX

“ She came with mother and with sire—  
 What need of more ?—I will not tire  
 With long recital of the rest,  
 Since I became the Cossack's guest.  
 They found me senseless on the plain,

840

They bore me to the nearest hut,  
 They brought me into life again—  
 Me—one day o'er their realm to reign !

Thus the vain fool who strove to glut  
 His rage, refining on my pain,

Sent me forth to the wilderness,  
 Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,  
 To pass the desert to a throne,—

850

What mortal his own doom may guess ?

Let none despond, let none despair !

To-morrow the Borysthenes

May see our coursers graze at ease

Upon his Turkish bank,—and never

Had I such welcome for a river

As I shall yield when safely there.



Comrades, good night ! ”—The Hetman threw  
His length beneath the oak-tree shade, 861  
With leafy couch already made,  
A bed nor comfortless nor new  
To him, who took his rest whene’er  
The hour arrived, no matter where :  
His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.  
And if ye marvel Charles forgot  
To thank his tale, *he* wondered not,—  
The king had been an hour asleep.

## THE LAMENT OF TASSO

## I

LONG years !—It tries the thrilling frame to bear  
 And eagle-spirit of a child of Song—  
 Long years of outrage, calumny, and wrong ;  
 Imputed madness, prison'd solitude,  
 And the mind's canker in its savage mood,  
 When the impatient thirst of light and air  
 Parches the heart ; and the abhorred grate,  
 Marring the sunbeams with its hideous shade,  
 Works through the throbbing eyeball to the brain,  
 With a hot sense of heaviness and pain ; 10  
 And bare, at once, Captivity display'd  
 Stands scoffing through the never-open'd gate,  
 Which nothing through its bars admits, save day,  
 And tasteless food, which I have eat alone  
 Till its unsocial bitterness is gone ;  
 And I can banquet like a beast of prey,  
 Sullen and lonely, couching in the cave  
 Which is my lair, and—it may be—my grave.  
 All this hath somewhat worn me, and may wear,  
 But must be borne. I stoop not to despair ; 20  
 For I have battled with mine agony,  
 And made me wings wherewith to overfly  
 The narrow circus of my dungeon wall,  
 And freed the Holy Sepulchre from thrall ;  
 And revell'd among men and things divine,  
 And pour'd my spirit over Palestine,  
 In honour of the sacred war for Him,  
 The God who was on earth and is in heaven,  
 For he has strengthen'd me in heart and limb.  
 That through this sufferance I might be forgiven, 30  
 I have employ'd my penance to record  
 How Salem's shrine was won, and how adored.

## II

But this is o'er—my pleasant task is done :—  
My long-sustaining friend of many years !  
If I do blot thy final page with tears,  
Know, that my sorrows have wrung from me none.  
But thou, my young creation ! my soul's child !  
Which ever playing round me came and smiled,  
And woo'd me from myself with thy sweet sight,  
Thou too art gone—and so is my delight : 40  
And therefore do I weep and inly bleed  
With this last bruise upon a broken reed.  
Thou too art ended—what is left me now ?  
For I have anguish yet to bear—and how ?  
I know not that—but in the innate force  
Of my own spirit shall be found resource.  
I have not sunk, for I had no remorse,  
Nor cause for such : they call'd me mad—and why ?  
Oh Leonora ! wilt not *thou* reply ? 50  
I was indeed delirious in my heart  
To lift my love so lofty as thou art ;  
But still my frenzy was not of the mind :  
I knew my fault, and feel my punishment  
Not less because I suffer it unbent.  
That thou wert beautiful, and I not blind,  
Hath been the sin which shuts me from mankind ;  
But let them go, or torture as they will,  
My heart can multiply thine image still ;  
Successful love may sate itself away ;  
The wretched are the faithful ; 'tis their fate 60  
To have all feeling, save the one, decay,  
And every passion into one dilate,  
As rapid rivers into ocean pour ;  
But ours is fathomless, and hath no shore.

## III

Above me, hark ! the long and maniac cry  
Of minds and bodies in captivity.  
And hark ! the lash and the increasing howl,  
And the half-inarticulate blasphemy !  
There be some here with worse than frenzy foul,



Some who do still goad on the o'er-labour'd mind,  
 And dim the little light that 's left behind 71  
 With needless torture, as their tyrant will  
 Is wound up to the lust of doing ill :  
 With these and with their victims am I class'd,  
 'Mid sounds and sights like these long years have pass'd ;  
 'Mid sights and sounds like these my life may close :  
 So let it be—for then I shall repose.

## IV

I have been patient, let me be so yet ;  
 I had forgotten half I would forget,  
 But it revives—Oh ! would it were my lot 80  
 To be forgetful as I am forgot !—  
 Feel I not wroth with those who bade me dwell  
 In this vast lazar-house of many woes ?  
 Where laughter is not mirth, nor thought the mind,  
 Nor words a language, nor ev'n men mankind ;  
 Where cries reply to curses, shrieks to blows,  
 And each is tortured in his separate hell—  
 For we are crowded in our solitudes—  
 Many, but each divided by the wall,  
 Which echoes Madness in her babbling moods ; 90  
 While all can hear, none heed his neighbour's call—  
 None ! save that One, the veriest wretch of all,  
 Who was not made to be the mate of these,  
 Nor bound between Distraction and Disease.  
 Feel I not wroth with those who placed me here ?  
 Who have debased me in the minds of men,  
 Debarring me the usage of my own,  
 Blighting my life in best of its career,  
 Branding my thoughts as things to shun and fear ?  
 Would I not pay them back these pangs again, 100  
 And teach them inward Sorrow's stifled groan ?  
 The struggle to be calm, and cold distress,  
 Which undermines our Stoical success ?  
 No !—still too proud to be vindictive—I  
 Have pardon'd princes' insults, and would die.  
 Yes, Sister of my Sovereign ! for thy sake

I weed all bitterness from out my breast,  
 It hath no business where *thou* art a guest :  
 Thy brother hates—but I cannot detest ;  
 Thou pitiest not—but I cannot forsake.

110

## V

Look on a love which knows not to despair,  
 But all unquench'd is still my better part,  
 Dwelling deep in my shut and silent heart,  
 As dwells the gather'd lightning in its cloud,  
 Encompass'd with its dark and rolling shroud,  
 Till struck,—forth flies the all-ethereal dart !  
 And thus at the collision of thy name  
 The vivid thought still flashes through my frame,  
 And for a moment all things as they were  
 Flit by me ; they are gone—I am the same.  
 And yet my love without ambition grew ;  
 I knew thy state, my station, and I knew  
 A Princess was no love-mate for a bard ;  
 I told it not, I breathed it not, it was  
 Sufficient to itself, its own reward ;  
 And if my eyes reveal'd it, they, alas !  
 Were punish'd by the silentness of thine,  
 And yet I did not venture to repine.  
 Thou wert to me a crystal-girded shrine,  
 Worshipp'd at holy distance, and around  
 Hallow'd and meekly kiss'd the saintly ground ;  
 Not for thou wert a princess, but that Love  
 Had robed thee with a glory, and array'd  
 Thy lineaments in beauty that dismay'd—  
 Oh ! not dismay'd—but awed, like One above !  
 And in that sweet severity there was  
 A something which all softness did surpass—  
 I know not how—thy genius master'd mine—  
 My star stood still before thee : if it were  
 Presumptuous thus to love without design,  
 That sad fatality hath cost me dear ;  
 But thou art dearest still, and I should be  
 Fit for this cell, which wrongs me—but for *thee*.  
 The very love which lock'd me to my chain

120

130

140



Hath lighten'd half its weight ; and for the rest,  
 Though heavy, lent me vigour to sustain,  
 And look to thee with undivided breast,  
 And foil the ingenuity of Pain.

## VI

It is no marvel—from my very birth  
 My soul was drunk with love, which did pervade 150  
 And mingle with whate'er I saw on earth :  
 Of objects all inanimate I made  
 Idols, and out of wild and lonely flowers,  
 And rocks, whereby they grew, a paradise,  
 Where I did lay me down within the shade  
 Of waving trees, and dreamed uncounted hours,  
 Though I was chid for wandering ; and the Wise  
 Shook their white aged heads o'er me, and said,  
 Of such materials wretched men were made,  
 And such a truant boy would end in woe, 160  
 And that the only lesson was a blow ;  
 And then they smote me, and I did not weep,  
 But cursed them in my heart, and to my haunt  
 Return'd and wept alone, and dream'd again  
 The visions which arise without a sleep,  
 And with my years my soul began to pant  
 With feelings of strange tumult and soft pain ;  
 And the whole heart exhaled into One Want,  
 But undefined and wandering, till the day  
 I found the thing I sought—and that was thee ; 170  
 And then I lost my being, all to be  
 Absorb'd in thine—the world was past away—  
*Thou* didst annihilate the earth to me !

## VII

I loved all Solitude, but little thought  
 To spend I know not what of life, remote  
 From all communion with existence, save  
 The maniac and his tyrant ; had I been  
 Their fellow, many years ere this had seen  
 My mind like theirs corrupted to its grave.  
 But who hath seen me writhe, or heard me rave ? 180



Perchance in such a cell we suffer more  
 Than the wreck'd sailor on his desert shore ;  
 The world is all before him—*mine is here*,  
 Scarce twice the space they must accord my bier.  
 What though *he* perish, he may lift his eye,  
 And with a dying glance upbraid the sky ;  
 I will not raise my own in such reproof,  
 Although 'tis clouded by my dungeon roof.

## VIII

Yet do I feel at times my mind decline,  
 But with a sense of its decay : I see 190  
 Unwonted lights along my prison shine,  
 And a strange demon, who is vexing me  
 With pilfering pranks and petty pains, below  
 The feeling of the healthful and the free ;  
 But much to One, who long hath suffer'd so,  
 Sickness of heart, and narrowness of place,  
 And all that may be borne, or can debase.  
 I thought mine enemies had been but Man,  
 But Spirits may be leagued with them ; all Earth 200  
 Abandons, Heaven forgets me : in the dearth  
 Of such defence the Powers of Evil can,  
 It may be, tempt me further,—and prevail  
 Against the outworn creature they assail.  
 Why in this furnace is my spirit proved,  
 Like steel in tempering fire ? because I loved ?  
 Because I loved what not to love, and see,  
 Was more or less than mortal, and than me.

## IX

I once was quick in feeling—that is o'er ;  
 My scars are callous, or I should have dash'd 210  
 My brain against these bars, as the sun flash'd  
 In mockery through them : If I bear and bore  
 The much I have recounted, and the more  
 Which hath no words,—'tis that I would not die  
 And sanction with self-slaughter the dull lie  
 Which snared me here, and with the brand of shame  
 Stamp Madness deep into my memory,  
 And woo Compassion to a blighted name,

Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.  
No—it shall be immortal ! and I make  
A future temple of my present cell, 220  
Which nations yet shall visit for my sake.  
While thou, Ferrara ! when no longer dwell  
The ducal chiefs within thee, shalt fall down,  
And crumbling piecemeal view thy hearthless halls,  
A poet's wreath shall be thine only crown,—  
A poet's dungeon thy most far renown,  
While strangers wonder o'er thy unpeopled walls !  
And thou, Leonora ! thou—who wert ashamed  
That such as I could love—who blush'd to hear  
To less than monarchs that thou couldst be dear,  
Go ! tell thy brother, that my heart, untamed 231  
By grief—years—weariness—and it may be  
A taint of that he would impute to me—  
From long infection of a den like this,  
Where the mind rots congenial with the abyss,—  
Adores thee still ; and add—that when the towers  
And battlements which guard his joyous hours  
Of banquet, dance, and revel, are forgot,  
Or left untended in a dull repose,—  
This, this, shall be a consecrated spot ! 240  
But *Thou*—when all that Birth and Beauty throws  
Of magic round thee is extinct—shalt have  
One half the laurel which o'ershades my grave.  
No power in death can tear our names apart,  
As none in life could rend thee from my heart.  
Yes, Leonora ! it shall be our fate  
To be entwined for ever—but too late !

# THE PROPHECY OF DANTE

## DEDICATION

LADY ! if for the cold and cloudy clime,  
 Where I was born, but where I would not die,  
 Of the great Poet-Sire of Italy  
 I dare to build the imitative rhyme,  
 Harsh Runic copy of the South's sublime,  
 THOU art the cause ; and howsoever I  
 Fall short of his immortal harmony,  
 Thy gentle heart will pardon me the crime.  
 Thou, in the pride of Beauty and of Youth,  
 Spakest ; and for thee to speak and be obey'd 10  
 Are one ; but only in the sunny South  
 Such sounds are uttered, and such charms display'd,  
 So sweet a language from so fair a mouth—  
 Ah ! to what effort would it not persuade ?

RAVENNA, *June 21, 1819.*

# THE PROPHECY OF DANTE

## CANTO THE FIRST

ONCE more in man's frail world ! which I had left  
 So long that 'twas forgotten ; and I feel  
 The weight of clay again,—too soon bereft  
 Of the immortal vision which could heal  
 My earthly sorrows, and to God's own skies  
 Lift me from that deep gulf without repeal,  
 Where late my ears rung with the damned cries  
 Of souls in hopeless bale ; and from that place  
 Of lesser torment, whence men may arise  
 Pure from the fire to join the angelic race : 10



Midst whom my own bright Beatrice bless'd  
My spirit with her light ; and to the base  
Of the eternal Triad ! first, last, best,  
Mysterious, three, sole, infinite, great God !  
Soul universal ! led the mortal guest,  
Unblasted by the glory, though he trod  
From star to star to reach the almighty throne.  
Oh Beatrice ! whose sweet limbs the sod  
So long hath press'd, and the cold marble stone,  
Thou sole pure seraph of my earliest love, 20  
Love so ineffable, and so alone,  
That nought on earth could more my bosom move,  
And meeting thee in heaven was but to meet  
That without which my soul, like the arkless dove,  
Had wander'd still in search of, nor her feet  
Relieved her wing till found : without thy light  
My paradise had still been incomplete.  
Since my tenth sun gave summer to my sight  
Thou wert my life, the essence of my thought,  
Loved ere I knew the name of love, and bright 30  
Still in these dim old eyes, now overwrought  
With the world's war, and years, and banishment,  
And tears for thee, by other woes untaught ;  
For mine is not a nature to be bent  
By tyrannous faction, and the brawling crowd,  
And though the long, long conflict hath been spent  
In vain,—and never more, save when the cloud  
Which overhangs the Apennine my mind's eye  
Pierces to fancy Florence, once so proud  
Of me, can I return, though but to die, 40  
Unto my native soil,—they have not yet  
Quench'd the old exile's spirit, stern and high.  
But the sun, though not overcast, must set,  
And the night cometh ; I am old in days,  
And deeds, and contemplation, and have met  
Destruction face to face in all his ways.  
The world hath left me, what it found me, pure,  
And if I have not gather'd yet its praise,  
I sought it not by any baser lure ;  
Man wrongs, and Time avenges, and my name 50

May form a monument not all obscure,  
Though such was not my ambition's end or aim,  
To add to the vain-glorious list of those  
Who dabble in the pettiness of fame,  
And make men's fickle breath the wind that blows  
Their sail, and deem it glory to be class'd  
With conquerors, and virtue's other foes,  
In bloody chronicles of ages past.

I would have had my Florence great and free ;  
Oh Florence ! Florence ! unto me thou wast 60  
Like that Jerusalem which the Almighty He  
Wept over, ' but thou wouldst not ; ' as the bird  
Gathers its young, I would have gather'd thee  
Beneath a parent pinion, hadst thou heard  
My voice ; but as the adder, deaf and fierce,  
Against the breast that cherish'd thee was stirr'd  
Thy venom, and my state thou didst amerce,  
And doom this body forfeit to the fire.

Alas ! how bitter is his country's curse  
To him who *for* that country would expire, 70  
But did not merit to expire *by* her,  
And loves her, loves her even in her ire !

The day may come when she will cease to err,  
The day may come she would be proud to have  
The dust she dooms to scatter, and transfer  
Of him, whom she denied a home, the grave.

But this shall not be granted ; let my dust  
Lie where it falls ; nor shall the soil which gave  
Me breath, but in her sudden fury thrust  
Me forth to breathe elsewhere, so reassume 80  
My indignant bones, because her angry gust  
Forsooth is over, and repeal'd her doom ;

No,—she denied me what was mine—my roof,  
And shall not have what is not hers—my tomb.  
Too long her armed wrath hath kept aloof  
The breast which would have bled for her, the heart  
That beat, the mind that was temptation proof,  
The man who fought, toil'd, travell'd, and each part  
Of a true citizen fulfill'd, and saw  
For his reward the Guelf's ascendant art 90



Pass his destruction even into a law.

These things are not made for forgetfulness,  
 Florence shall be forgotten first ; too raw  
 The wound, too deep the wrong, and the distress  
 Of such endurance too prolong'd to make  
 My pardon greater, her injustice less,  
 Though late repented ; yet—yet for her sake  
 I feel some fonder yearnings, and for thine,  
 My own Beatrice, I would hardly take  
 Vengeance upon the land which once was mine, 100  
 And still is hallow'd by thy dust's return,  
 Which would protect the murderess like a shrine,  
 And save ten thousand foes by thy sole urn.  
 Though, like old Marius from Minturnæ's marsh  
 And Carthage ruins, my lone breast may burn  
 At times with evil feelings hot and harsh,  
 And sometimes the last pangs of a vile foe  
 Writhe in a dream before me, and o'erarch  
 My brow with hopes of triumph,—let them go !  
 Such are the last infirmities of those 110  
 Who long have suffer'd more than mortal woe,  
 And yet being mortal still have no repose  
 But on the pillow of Revenge—Revenge,  
 Who sleeps to dream of blood, and waking glows  
 With the oft-baffled slakeless thirst of change,  
 When we shall mount again, and they that trod  
 Be trampled on, while Death and Até range  
 O'er humbled heads and sever'd necks—Great God !  
 Take these thoughts from me—to thy hands I yield  
 My many wrongs, and thine Almighty rod 120  
 Will fall on those who smote me,—be my shield !  
 As thou hast been in peril, and in pain,  
 In turbulent cities, and the tented field—  
 In toil, and many troubles borne in vain  
 For Florence,—I appeal from her to Thee !  
 Thee whom I late saw in thy loftiest reign,  
 Even in that glorious vision, which to see  
 And live was never granted until now,  
 And yet thou hast permitted this to me.  
 Alas ! with what a weight upon my brow 130



The sense of earth and earthly things come back,  
Corrosive passions, feelings dull and low,  
The heart's quick throb upon the mental rack,  
Long day, and dreary night ; the retrospect  
Of half a century bloody and black,  
And the frail few years I may yet expect  
Hoary and hopeless, but less hard to bear,  
For I have been too long and deeply wreck'd  
On the lone rock of desolate Despair,  
To lift my eyes more to the passing sail 140  
Which shuns that reef so horrible and bare ;  
Nor raise my voice—for who would heed my wail ?  
I am not of this people, nor this age,  
And yet my harpings will unfold a tale  
Which shall preserve these times when not a page  
Of their perturbed annals could attract  
An eye to gaze upon their civil rage,  
Did not my verse embalm full many an act  
Worthless as they who wrought it : 'tis the doom 150  
Of spirits of my order to be rack'd  
In life, to wear their hearts out, and consume  
Their days in endless strife, and die alone ;  
Then future thousands crowd around their tomb,  
And pilgrims come from climes where they have known  
The name of him—who now is but a name,  
And wasting homage o'er the sullen stone,  
Spread his—by him unheard, unheeded, fame ;  
And mine at least hath cost me dear : to die  
Is nothing ; but to wither thus—to tame 160  
My mind down from its own infinity—  
To live in narrow ways with little men,  
A common sight to every common eye,  
A wanderer, while even wolves can find a den,  
Ripp'd from all kindred, from all home, all things  
That make communion sweet, and soften pain—  
To feel me in the solitude of kings  
Without the power that makes them bear a crown—  
To envy every dove his nest and wings  
Which waft him where the Apennine looks down 170  
On Arno, till he perches, it may be,

Within my all inexorable town,  
 Where yet my boys are, and that fatal she,  
 Their mother, the cold partner who hath brought  
 Destruction for a dowry—this to see  
 And feel, and know without repair, hath taught  
 A bitter lesson ; but it leaves me free :  
 I have not vilely found, nor basely sought,  
 They made an Exile—not a slave of me.

## CANTO THE SECOND

THE Spirit of the fervent days of Old,  
 When words were things that came to pass, and  
 thought  
 Flash'd o'er the future, bidding men behold  
 Their children's children's doom already brought  
 Forth from the abyss of time which is to be,  
 The chaos of events, where lie half-wrought  
 Shapes that must undergo mortality ;  
 What the great Seers of Israel wore within,  
 That spirit was on them, and is on me,  
 And if, Cassandra-like, amidst the din  
 Of conflict none will hear, or hearing heed  
 This voice from out the Wilderness, the sin  
 Be theirs, and my own feelings be my meed,  
 The only guerdon I have ever known.  
 Hast thou not bled ? and hast thou still to bleed,  
 Italia ? Ah ! to me such things, foreshown  
 With dim sepulchral light, bid me forget  
 In thine irreparable wrongs my own ;  
 We can have but one country, and even yet  
 Thou'rt mine—my bones shall be within thy breast,  
 My soul within thy language, which once set  
 With our old Roman sway in the wide West ;  
 But I will make another tongue arise  
 As lofty and more sweet, in which express'd  
 The hero's ardour, or the lover's sighs,  
 Shall find alike such sounds for every theme  
 That every word, as brilliant as thy skies,  
 Shall realise a poet's proudest dream,



And make thee Europe's nightingale of song ;  
So that all present speech to thine shall seem 30  
The note of meaner birds, and every tongue  
Confess its barbarism when compared with thine.  
This shalt thou owe to him thou didst so wrong,  
Thy Tuscan bard, the banish'd Ghibelline.  
Woe ! woe ! the veil of coming centuries  
Is rent,—a thousand years which yet supine  
Lie like the ocean waves ere winds arise,  
Heaving in dark and sullen undulation,  
Float from eternity into these eyes ;  
The storms yet sleep, the clouds still keep their station,  
The unborn earthquake yet is in the womb, 41  
The bloody chaos yet expects creation,  
But all things are disposing for thy doom ;  
The elements await but for the word,  
' Let there be darkness ! ' and thou grow'st a tomb !  
Yes ! thou, so beautiful, shalt feel the sword,  
Thou, Italy ! so fair that Paradise,  
Revived in thee, blooms forth to man restored :  
Ah ! must the sons of Adam lose it twice ?  
Thou, Italy ! whose ever golden fields, 50  
Plough'd by the sunbeams solely, would suffice  
For the world's granary ; thou, whose sky heaven  
gilds  
With brighter stars, and robes with deeper blue ;  
Thou, in whose pleasant places Summer builds  
Her palace, in whose cradle Empire grew,  
And form'd the Eternal City's ornaments  
From spoils of kings whom freemen overthrew ;  
Birthplace of heroes, sanctuary of saints,  
Where earthly first, then heavenly glory made  
Her home ; thou, all which fondest fancy paints, 60  
And finds her prior vision but portray'd  
In feeble colours, when the eye—from the Alp  
Of horrid snow, and rock, and shaggy shade  
Of desert-loving pine, whose emerald scalp  
Nods to the storm—dilates and dotes o'er thee,  
And wistfully implores, as 'twere for help  
To see thy sunny fields, my Italy,



Nearer and nearer yet, and dearer still  
 The more approach'd, and dearest were they free,  
 Thou—thou must wither to each tyrant's will : 70  
 The Goth hath been,—the German, Frank, and Hun  
 Are yet to come,—and on the imperial hill  
 Ruin, already proud of the deeds done  
 By the old barbarians, there awaits the new,  
 Throned on the Palatine, while lost and won  
 Rome at her feet lies bleeding ; and the hue  
 Of human sacrifice and Roman slaughter  
 Troubles the clotted air, of late so blue,  
 And deepens into red the saffron water  
 Of Tiber, thick with dead ; the helpless priest, 80  
 And still more helpless nor less holy daughter,  
 Vow'd to their God, have shrieking fled, and ceased  
 Their ministry : the nations take their prey,  
 Iberian, Almain, Lombard, and the beast  
 And bird, wolf, vulture, more humane than they  
 Are ; these but gorge the flesh and lap the gore  
 Of the departed, and then go their way ;  
 But those, the human savages, explore  
 All paths of torture, and insatiate yet,  
 With Ugolino hunger prowl for more. 90  
 Nine moons shall rise o'er scenes like this and set ;  
 The chiefless army of the dead, which late  
 Beneath the traitor Prince's banner met,  
 Hath left its leader's ashes at the gate ;  
 Had but the royal Rebel lived, perchance  
 Thou hadst been spared, but his involved thy fate.  
 Oh ! Rome, the spoiler or the spoil of France,  
 From Brennus to the Bourbon, never, never  
 Shall foreign standard to thy walls advance,  
 But Tiber shall become a mournful river. 100  
 Oh ! when the strangers pass the Alps and Po,  
 Crush them, ye rocks ! floods overwhelm them, and for  
 ever !  
 Why sleep the idle avalanches so,  
 To topple on the lonely pilgrim's head ?  
 Why doth Eridanus but overflow  
 The peasant's harvest from his turbid bed ?

Were not each barbarous horde a nobler prey ?  
Over Cambyzes' host the desert spread  
Her sandy ocean, and the sea-waves' sway  
Roll'd over Pharaoh and his thousands,—why, 110  
Mountains and waters, do ye not as they ?  
And you, ye men ! Romans who dare not die,  
Sons of the conquerors who overthrew  
Those who o'erthrew proud Xerxes, where yet lie  
The dead whose tomb Oblivion never knew,  
Are the Alps weaker than Thermopylæ ?  
Their passes more alluring to the view  
Of an invader ? is it they, or ye,  
That to each host the mountain-gate unbar,  
And leave the march in peace, the passage free ?  
Why, Nature's self detains the victor's car, 121  
And makes your land impregnable, if earth  
Could be so ; but alone she will not war,  
Yet aids the warrior worthy of his birth  
In a soil where the mothers bring forth men :  
Not so with those whose souls are little worth ;  
For them no fortress can avail,—the den  
Of the poor reptile which preserves its sting  
Is more secure than walls of adamant, when  
The hearts of those within are quivering. 130  
Are ye not brave ? Yes, yet the Ausonian soil  
Hath hearts, and hands, and arms, and hosts to bring  
Against Oppression ; but how vain the toil,  
While still Division sows the seeds of woe  
And weakness, till the stranger reaps the spoil !  
Oh ! my own beauteous land ! so long laid low,  
So long the grave of thy own children's hopes,  
When there is but required a single blow  
To break the chain, yet—yet the Avenger stops, 139  
And Doubt and Discord step 'twixt thine and thee,  
And join their strength to that which with thee  
copes ;  
What is there wanting then to set thee free,  
And show thy beauty in its fullest light ?  
To make the Alps impassable ; and we,  
Her sons, may do this with *one* deed—Unite.



## CANTO THE THIRD

FROM out the mass of never-dying ill,  
The Plague, the Prince, the Stranger, and the Sword,  
Vials of wrath but emptied to refill  
And flow again, I cannot all record  
That crowds on my prophetic eye: the earth  
And ocean written o'er would not afford  
Space for the annal, yet it shall go forth;  
Yes, all, though not by human pen, is graven,  
There where the farthest suns and stars have birth,  
Spread like a banner at the gate of heaven, 10  
The bloody scroll of our millennial wrongs  
Waves, and the echo of our groans is driven  
Athwart the sound of archangelic songs,  
And Italy, the martyr'd nation's gore,  
Will not in vain arise to where belongs  
Omnipotence and mercy evermore:  
Like to a harp-string stricken by the wind,  
The sound of her lament shall, rising o'er  
The seraph voices, touch the Almighty Mind.  
Meantime I, humblest of thy sons, and of 20  
Earth's dust by immortality refined  
To sense and suffering, though the vain may scoff,  
And tyrants threat, and meeker victims bow  
Before the storm because its breath is rough,  
To thee, my country! whom before, as now,  
I loved and love, devote the mournful lyre  
And melancholy gift high powers allow  
To read the future; and if now my fire  
Is not as once it shone o'er thee, forgive!  
I but foretell thy fortunes—then expire; 30  
Think not that I would look on them and live.  
A spirit forces me to see and speak,  
And for my guerdon grants *not* to survive;  
My heart shall be pour'd over thee and break:  
Yet for a moment, ere I must resume  
Thy sable web of sorrow, let me take  
Over the gleams that flash athwart thy gloom



A softer glimpse; some stars shine through thy night,  
And many meteors, and above thy tomb  
Leans sculptured Beauty, which Death cannot blight :  
And from thine ashes boundless spirits rise 41  
To give thee honour, and the earth delight ;  
Thy soil shall still be pregnant with the wise,  
The gay, the learn'd, the generous, and the brave,  
Native to thee as summer to thy skies,  
Conquerors on foreign shores, and the far wave,  
Discoverers of new worlds, which take their name ;  
For *thee* alone they have no arm to save,  
And all thy recompense is in their fame,  
A noble one to them, but not to thee— 50  
Shall they be glorious, and thou still the same ?  
Oh ! more than these illustrious far shall be  
The being—and even yet he may be born—  
The mortal saviour who shall set thee free,  
And see thy diadem, so changed and worn  
By fresh barbarians, on thy brow replaced ;  
And the sweet sun replenishing thy morn,  
Thy moral morn, too long with clouds defaced,  
And noxious vapours from Avernus risen,  
Such as all they must breathe who are debased 60  
By servitude, and have the mind in prison.  
Yet through this centuried eclipse of woe  
Some voices shall be heard, and earth shall listen ;  
Poets shall follow in the path I show,  
And make it broader : the same brilliant sky  
Which cheers the birds to song shall bid them  
glow,  
And raise their notes as natural and high ;  
Tuneful shall be their numbers ; they shall sing  
Many of love, and some of liberty,  
But few shall soar upon that eagle's wing. 70  
And look in the sun's face with eagle's gaze,  
All free and fearless as the feather'd king,  
But fly more near the earth ; how many a phrase  
Sublime shall lavish'd be on some small prince  
In all the prodigality of praise !  
And language, eloquently false, evince

The harlotry of genius, which, like beauty,  
Too oft forgets its own self-reverence,  
And looks on prostitution as a duty.

He who once enters in a tyrant's hall 80  
As guest is slave, his thoughts become a booty,  
And the first day which sees the chain enthrall  
A captive, sees his half of manhood gone—  
The soul's emasculation saddens all  
His spirit; thus the Bard too near the throne  
Quails from his inspiration, bound to *please*,—  
How servile is the task to please alone!  
To smooth the verse to suit his sovereign's ease  
And royal leisure, nor too much prolong  
Aught save his eulogy, and find, and seize, 90  
Or force, or forge fit argument of song!  
Thus trammell'd, thus condemn'd to Flattery's trebles,  
He toils through all, still trembling to be wrong:  
For fear some noble thoughts, like heavenly rebels,  
Should rise up in high treason to his brain,  
He sings, as the Athenian spoke, with pebbles  
In 's mouth, lest truth should stammer through his  
strain.

But out of the long file of sonneteers  
There shall be some who will not sing in vain,  
And he, their prince, shall rank among my peers, 100  
And love shall be his torment; but his grief  
Shall make an immortality of tears,  
And Italy shall hail him as the Chief  
Of Poet-lovers, and his higher song  
Of Freedom wreath him with as green a leaf.  
But in a farther age shall rise along  
The banks of Po two greater still than he;  
The world which smiled on him shall do them  
wrong  
Till they are ashes, and repose with me.  
The first will make an epoch with his lyre, 110  
And fill the earth with feats of chivalry:  
His fancy like a rainbow, and his fire,  
Like that of Heaven, immortal, and his thought  
Borne onward with a wing that cannot tire;



Pleasure shall, like a butterfly new caught,  
Flutter her lovely pinions o'er his theme,  
And Art itself seem into Nature wrought  
By the transparency of his bright dream.—  
The second, of a tenderer, sadder mood,  
Shall pour his soul out o'er Jerusalem ; 120  
He, too, shall sing of arms, and Christian blood  
Shed where Christ bled for man ; and his high harp  
Shall, by the willow over Jordan's flood,  
Revive a song of Sion, and the sharp  
Conflict, and final triumph of the brave  
And pious, and the strife of hell to warp  
Their hearts from their great purpose, until wave  
The red-cross banners where the first red Cross  
Was crimson'd from his veins who died to save,  
Shall be his sacred argument ; the loss 130  
Of years, of favour, freedom, even of fame  
Contested for a time, while the smooth gloss  
Of courts would slide o'er his forgotten name  
And call captivity a kindness, meant  
To shield him from insanity or shame,  
Such shall be his meet guerdon ! who was sent  
To be Christ's Laureate—they reward him well !  
Florence dooms me but death or banishment,  
Ferrara him a pittance and a cell,  
Harder to bear and less deserved, for I 140  
Had stung the factions which I strove to quell ;  
But this meek man, who with a lover's eye  
Will look on earth and heaven, and who will deign  
To embalm with his celestial flattery,  
As poor a thing as e'er was spawn'd to reign,  
What will *he* do to merit such a doom ?  
Perhaps he'll *love*,—and is not love in vain  
Torture enough without a living tomb ?  
Yet it will be so—he and his compeer,  
The Bard of Chivalry, will both consume 150  
In penury and pain too many a year,  
And, dying in despondency, bequeath  
To the kind world, which scarce will yield a tear,  
A heritage enriching all who breathe



With the wealth of a genuine poet's soul,  
 And to their country a redoubled wreath,  
 Unmatch'd by time ; not Hellas can unroll  
 Through her olympiads two such names, though one  
 Of hers be mighty ;—and is this the whole  
 Of such men's destiny beneath the sun ? 160

Must all the finer thoughts, the thrilling sense,  
 The electric blood with which their arteries run,  
 Their body's self turned soul with the intense  
 Feeling of that which is, and fancy of  
 That which should be, to such a recompense  
 Conduct ? shall their bright plumage on the rough  
 Storm be still scatter'd ? Yes, and it must be ;  
 For, form'd of far too penetrable stuff,  
 These birds of Paradise but long to flee

Back to their native mansion, soon they find 170  
 Earth's mist with their pure pinions not agree,  
 And die or are degraded ; for the mind  
 Succumbs to long infection, and despair,  
 And vulture passions flying close behind,  
 Await the moment to assail and tear ;

And when at length the winged wanderers stoop,  
 Then is the prey-birds' triumph, then they share  
 The spoil, o'erpower'd at length by one fell swoop.  
 Yet some have been untouch'd who learn'd to bear,  
 Some whom no power could ever force to droop,  
 Who could resist themselves even, hardest care ! 181

And task most hopeless ; but some such have been,  
 And if my name amongst the number were,  
 That destiny austere, and yet serene,  
 Were prouder than more dazzling fame unblest'd ;  
 The Alp's snow summit nearer heaven is seen  
 Than the volcano's fierce eruptive crest,  
 Whose splendour from the black abyss is flung,  
 While the scorch'd mountain, from whose burning  
 breast

A temporary torturing flame is wrung, 190  
 Shines for a night of terror, then repels  
 Its fire back to the hell from whence it sprung,  
 The hell which in its entrails ever dwells.

## CANTO THE FOURTH

MANY are poets who have never penn'd  
Their inspiration, and perchance the best:  
They felt, and loved, and died, but would not lend  
Their thoughts to meaner beings; they compress'd  
The god within them, and rejoin'd the stars  
Unlaurell'd upon earth, but far more bless'd  
Than those who are degraded by the jars  
Of passion, and their frailties link'd to fame,  
Conquerors of high renown, but full of scars.  
Many are poets but without the name, 10  
For what is poesy but to create  
From overfeeling good or ill; and aim  
At an external life beyond our fate,  
And be the new Prometheus of new men,  
Bestowing fire from heaven, and then, too late,  
Finding the pleasure given repaid with pain,  
And vultures to the heart of the bestower,  
Who, having lavish'd his high gift in vain,  
Lies chain'd to his lone rock by the sea-shore?  
So be it: we can bear.—But thus all they 20  
Whose intellect is an o'ermastering power  
Which still recoils from its encumbering clay  
Or lightens it to spirit, whatsoe'er  
The form which their creations may essay,  
Are bards; the kindled marble's bust may wear  
More poesy upon its speaking brow  
Than aught less than the Homeric page may bear;  
One noble stroke with a whole life may glow,  
Or deify the canvas till it shine 30  
With beauty so surpassing all below,  
That they who kneel to idols so divine  
Break no commandment, for high heaven is there  
Transfused, transfigured: and the line  
Of poesy, which peoples but the air  
With thought and beings of our thought reflected,  
Can do no more: then let the artist share  
The palm, he shares the peril, and dejected



Faints o'er the labour unapproved—Alas !  
 Despair and Genius are too oft connected.  
 Within the ages which before me pass  
 Art shall resume and equal even the sway  
 Which with Apelles and old Phidias  
 She held in Hellas' unforgotten day.  
 Ye shall be taught by Ruin to revive  
 The Grecian forms at least from their decay,  
 And Roman souls at last again shall live  
 In Roman works wrought by Italian hands,  
 And temples, loftier than the old temples, give  
 New wonders to the world ; and while still stands  
 The austere Pantheon, into heaven shall soar  
 A dome, its image, while the base expands  
 Into a fane surpassing all before,  
 Such as all flesh shall flock to kneel in : ne'er  
 Such sight hath been unfolded by a door  
 As this, to which all nations shall repair  
 And lay their sins at this huge gate of heaven.  
 And the bold Architect unto whose care  
 The daring charge to raise it shall be given,  
 Whom all hearts shall acknowledge as their lord,  
 Whether into the marble chaos driven  
 His chisel bid the Hebrew, at whose word  
 Israel left Egypt, stop the waves in stone,  
 Or hues of Hell be by his pencil pour'd  
 Over the damn'd before the Judgement-throne,  
 Such as I saw them, such as all shall see,  
 Or fanes be built of grandeur yet unknown,  
 The stream of his great thoughts shall spring from me,  
 The Ghibelline, who traversed the three realms  
 Which form the empire of eternity.  
 Amidst the clash of swords, and clang of helms,  
 The age which I anticipate, no less  
 Shall be the Age of Beauty, and while whelms  
 Calamity the nations with distress,  
 The genius of my country shall arise,  
 A Cedar towering o'er the Wilderness,  
 Lovely in all its branches to all eyes,  
 Fragrant as fair, and recognised afar,

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Wafting its native incense through the skies.  
Sovereigns shall pause amidst their sport of war,  
Wean'd for an hour from blood, to turn and gaze  
On canvas or on stone ; and they who mar 81  
All beauty upon earth, compell'd to praise,  
Shall feel the power of that which they destroy ;  
And Art's mistaken gratitude shall raise  
To tyrants who but take her for a toy,  
Emblems and monuments, and prostitute  
Her charms to pontiffs proud, who but employ  
The man of genius as the meanest brute  
To bear a burthen, and to serve a need,  
To sell his labours, and his soul to boot. 90  
Who toils for nations may be poor indeed,  
But free ; who sweats for monarchs is no more  
Than the gilt chamberlain, who, clothed and fee'd,  
Stands sleek and slavish, bowing at his door.  
Oh, Power that rulest and inspirest ! how  
Is it that they on earth, whose earthly power  
Is likest thine in heaven in outward show,  
Least like to thee in attributes divine,  
Tread on the universal necks that bow,  
And then assure us that their rights are thine ? 100  
And how is it that they, the sons of fame,  
Whose inspiration seems to them to shine  
From high, they whom the nations ofttest name,  
Must pass their days in penury or pain,  
Or step to grandeur through the paths of shame,  
And wear a deeper brand and gaudier chain ?  
Or if their destiny be born aloof  
From lowliness, or tempted thence in vain,  
In their own souls sustain a harder proof,  
The inner war of passions deep and fierce ? 110  
Florence ! when thy harsh sentence razed my roof,  
I loved thee ; but the vengeance of my verse,  
The hate of injuries which every year  
Makes greater, and accumulates my curse,  
Shall live, outliving all thou holdest dear,  
Thy pride, thy wealth, thy freedom, and even *that*,  
The most infernal of all evils here,

The sway of petty tyrants in a state ;  
For such sway is not limited to kings,  
And demagogues yield to them but in date, 120  
As swept off sooner ; in all deadly things,  
Which make men hate themselves, and one another,  
In discord, cowardice, cruelty, all that springs,  
From Death the Sin-born's incest with his mother,  
In rank oppression in its rudest shape,  
The faction Chief is but the Sultan's brother,  
And the worst despot's far less human ape :  
Florence ! when this lone spirit, which so long  
Yearn'd, as the captive toiling at escape,  
To fly back to thee in despite of wrong, 130  
An exile, saddest of all prisoners,  
Who has the whole world for a dungeon strong,  
Seas, mountains, and the horizon's verge for bars,  
Which shut him from the sole small spot of earth,  
Where—whatsoever his fate—he still were hers,  
His country's, and might die where he had birth—  
Florence ! when this lone spirit shall return  
To kindred spirits, thou wilt feel my worth,  
And seek to honour with an empty urn  
The ashes thou shalt ne'er obtain—Alas ! 140  
'What have I done to thee, my people ?' Stern  
Are all thy dealings, but in this they pass  
The limits of man's common malice, for  
All that a citizen could be I was ;  
Raised by thy will, all thine in peace or war.  
And for this thou hast warr'd with me—'Tis done :  
I may not overleap the eternal bar  
Built up between us, and will die alone,  
Beholding with the dark eye of a seer  
The evil days to gifted souls foreshown, 150  
Foretelling them to those who will not hear.  
As in the old time, till the hour be come  
When Truth shall strike their eyes through many  
a tear,  
And make them own the Prophet in his tomb.



# MANFRED

## A DRAMATIC POEM

'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.'

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MANFRED  
CHAMOIS HUNTER  
ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE  
MANUEL  
HERMAN

WITCH OF THE ALPS  
ARIMANES  
NEMESIS  
THE DESTINIES  
SPIRITS, &c.

*The Scene of the Drama is amongst the Higher Alps—partly  
in the Castle of Manfred, and partly in the Mountains.*

### ACT I

SCENE I.—MANFRED *alone*.—*Scene, a Gothic Gallery.—  
Time, Midnight.*

*Man.* The lamp must be replenish'd, but even then  
It will not burn so long as I must watch :  
My slumbers—if I slumber—are not sleep,  
But a continuance of enduring thought,  
Which then I can resist not : in my heart  
There is a vigil, and these eyes but close  
To look within ; and yet I live, and bear  
The aspect and the form of breathing men.  
But grief should be the instructor of the wise ;  
Sorrow is knowledge : they who know the most      10  
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth,  
The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life.  
Philosophy and science, and the springs  
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,



I have essay'd, and in my mind there is  
 A power to make these subject to itself—  
 But they avail not : I have done men good,  
 And I have met with good even among men—  
 But this avail'd not : I have had my foes,  
 And none have baffled, many fallen before me— 20  
 But this avail'd not :—Good, or evil, life,  
 Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,  
 Have been to me as rain unto the sands,  
 Since that all-nameless hour. I have no dread,  
 And feel the curse to have no natural fear,  
 Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes or wishes,  
 Or lurking love of something on the earth.  
 Now to my task.—

Mysterious Agency !

Ye spirits of the unbounded Universe !  
 Whom I have sought in darkness and in light— 30  
 Ye, who do compass earth about, and dwell  
 In subtler essence—ye, to whom the tops  
 Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,  
 And earth's and ocean's caves familiar things—  
 I call upon ye by the written charm  
 Which gives me power upon you—Rise ! Appear !  
[A pause.]

They come not yet.—Now by the voice of him  
 Who is the first among you—by this sign,  
 Which makes you tremble—by the claims of him  
 Who is undying,—Rise ! Appear !—Appear ! 40  
[A pause.]

If it be so—Spirits of earth and air,  
 Ye shall not thus elude me : by a power,  
 Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,  
 Which had its birthplace in a star condemn'd,  
 The burning wreck of a demolish'd world,  
 A wandering hell in the eternal space ;  
 By the strong curse which is upon my soul,  
 The thought which is within me and around me,  
 I do compel ye to my will.—Appear !

[A star is seen at the darker end of the gallery :  
 it is stationary ; and a voice is heard singing.]

## FIRST SPIRIT.

Mortal ! to thy bidding bow'd,  
From my mansion in the cloud,  
Which the breath of twilight builds,  
And the summer's sunset gilds  
With the azure and vermilion,  
Which is mix'd for my pavilion ;  
Though thy quest may be forbidden,  
On a star-beam I have ridden,  
To thine adjuration bow'd,  
Mortal—be thy wish avow'd !

50

*Voice of the* SECOND SPIRIT.

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains ;  
They crown'd him long ago  
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,  
With a diadem of snow.  
Around his waist are forests braced,  
The Avalanche in his hand ;  
But ere it fall, that thundering ball  
Must pause for my command.  
The Glacier's cold and restless mass  
Moves onward day by day ;  
But I am he who bids it pass,  
Or with its ice delay.  
I am the spirit of the place,  
Could make the mountain bow  
And quiver to his cavern'd base—  
And what with me wouldst *Thou* ?

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70

*Voice of the* THIRD SPIRIT.

In the blue depth of the waters,  
Where the wave hath no strife,  
Where the wind is a stranger,  
And the sea-snake hath life,  
Where the Mermaid is decking  
Her green hair with shells,  
Like the storm on the surface  
Came the sound of thy spells ;

80

O'er my calm Hall of Coral  
The deep echo roll'd—  
To the Spirit of Ocean  
Thy wishes unfold !

FOURTH SPIRIT.

Where the slumbering earthquake  
Lies pillow'd on fire,  
And the lakes of bitumen  
Rise boilingly higher ;  
Where the roots of the Andes  
Strike deep in the earth,  
As their summits to heaven  
Shoot soaringly forth ;  
I have quitted my birthplace,  
Thy bidding to bide—  
Thy spell hath subdued me,  
Thy will be my guide ! .

90

FIFTH SPIRIT.

I am the Rider of the wind,  
The Stirrer of the storm ;  
The hurricane I left behind  
Is yet with lightning warm ;  
To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea  
I swept upon the blast :  
The fleet I met sail'd well, and yet  
'Twill sink ere night be past.

100

SIXTH SPIRIT.

My dwelling is the shadow of the night,  
Why doth thy magic torture me with light ?

SEVENTH SPIRIT.

The star which rules thy destiny  
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me :  
It was a world as fresh and fair  
As e'er revolved round sun in air  
Its course was free and regular,  
Space bosom'd not a lovelier star.

110



The hour arrived—and it became  
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,  
A pathless comet, and a curse,  
The menace of the universe ;  
Still rolling on with innate force, 120  
Without a sphere, without a course,  
A bright deformity on high,  
The monster of the upper sky !  
And thou ! beneath its influence born—  
Thou worm ! whom I obey and scorn—  
Forced by a power (which is not thine,  
And lent thee but to make thee mine)  
For this brief moment to descend,  
Where these weak spirits round thee bend  
And parley with a thing like thee— 130  
What wouldst thou, Child of Clay ! with me ?

*The SEVEN SPIRITS.*

Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains, winds, thy star,  
Are at thy beck and bidding, Child of Clay !  
Before thee at thy quest their spirits are—  
What wouldst thou with us, son of mortals—say ?

*Man.* Forgetfulness—

*First Spirit.* Of what—of whom—and why ?

*Man.* Of that which is within me ; read it there—  
Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.

*Spirit.* We can but give thee that which we possess :  
Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the power 140  
O'er earth—the whole, or portion—or a sign  
Which shall control the elements, whereof  
We are the dominators,—each and all,  
These shall be thine.

*Man.* Oblivion, self-oblivion !  
Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms  
Ye offer so profusely what I ask ?

*Spirit.* It is not in our essence, in our skill ;  
But—thou may'st die.

*Man.* Will death bestow it on me ?

*Spirit.* We are immortal, and do not forget ;

We are eternal ; and to us the past 150  
Is, as the future, present. Art thou answer'd ?

*Man.* Ye mock me—but the power which brought  
ye here

Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not at my will !  
The mind, the spirit, the Promethean spark,  
The lightning of my being, is as bright,  
Pervading, and far darting as your own,  
And shall not yield to yours, though coop'd in clay !  
Answer, or I will teach you what I am.

*Spirit.* We answer as we answer'd ; our reply  
Is even in thine own words.

*Man.* 160 Why say ye so ?

*Spirit.* If, as thou say'st, thine essence be as ours,  
We have replied in telling thee, the thing  
Mortals call death hath nought to do with us.

*Man.* I then have call'd ye from your realms in vain ;  
Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.

*Spirit.* Say—  
What we possess we offer ; it is thine :  
Bethink ere thou dismiss us ; ask again ;  
Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of  
days——

*Man.* Accursed ! what have I to do with days ?  
They are too long already.—Hence—begone ! 170

*Spirit.* Yet pause : being here, our will would do  
thee service ;

Bethink thee, is there then no other gift  
Which we can make not worthless in thine eyes ?

*Man.* No, none : yet stay—one moment, ere we part,  
I would behold ye face to face. I hear  
Your voices, sweet and melancholy sounds,  
As music on the waters ; and I see  
The steady aspect of a clear large star ;  
But nothing more. Approach me as ye are,  
Or one, or all, in your accustom'd forms. 180

*Spirit.* We have no forms, beyond the elements  
Of which we are the mind and principle :  
But choose a form—in that we will appear.

*Man.* I have no choice ; there is no form on earth



Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,  
Who is most powerful of ye, take such aspect  
As unto him may seem most fitting—Come!

*Seventh Spirit (appearing in the shape of a beautiful female figure). Behold!*

*Man.* Oh God! if it be thus, and thou  
Art not a madness and a mockery,  
I yet might be most happy. I will clasp thee, 190  
And we again will be——

*[The figure vanishes.*  
My heart is crush'd!  
*[MANFRED falls senseless.*

*(A voice is heard in the Incantation which follows.)*

When the moon is on the wave,  
And the glow-worm in the grass,  
And the meteor on the grave,  
And the wisp on the morass;  
When the falling stars are shooting,  
And the answer'd owls are hooting,  
And the silent leaves are still  
In the shadow of the hill,  
Shall my soul be upon thine, 200  
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep,  
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep;  
There are shades which will not vanish,  
There are thoughts thou canst not banish;  
By a power to thee unknown,  
Thou canst never be alone;  
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,  
Thou art gather'd in a cloud;  
And for ever shalt thou dwell 210  
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,  
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye  
As a thing that, though unseen,  
Must be near thee, and hath been;



And when in that secret dread  
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,  
Thou shalt marvel I am not  
As thy shadow on the spot,  
And the power which thou dost feel  
Shall be what thou must conceal.

220

And a magic voice and verse  
Hath baptized thee with a curse ;  
And a spirit of the air  
Hath begirt thee with a snare ;  
In the wind there is a voice  
Shall forbid thee to rejoice ;  
And to thee shall Night deny  
All the quiet of her sky ;  
And the day shall have a sun,  
Which shall make thee wish it done.

230

From thy false tears I did distil  
An essence which hath strength to kill ;  
From thy own heart I then did wring  
The black blood in its blackest spring ;  
From thy own smile I snatch'd the snake,  
For there it coil'd as in a brake ;  
From thy own lip I drew the charm  
Which gave all these their chiefest harm ;  
In proving every poison known,  
I found the strongest was thine own.

240

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,  
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,  
By that most seeming virtuous eye,  
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy ;  
By the perfection of thine art  
Which pass'd for human thine own heart ;  
By thy delight in others' pain,  
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,  
I call upon thee ! and compel  
Thyself to be thy proper Hell !

250

And on thy head I pour the vial  
Which doth devote thee to this trial ;  
Nor to slumber, nor to die,  
Shall be in thy destiny ;  
Though thy death shall still seem near  
To thy wish, but as a fear ;  
Lo ! the spell now works around thee,  
And the clankless chain hath bound thee :  
O'er thy heart and brain together  
Hath the word been pass'd—now wither !

260

## SCENE II

*The Mountain of the Jungfrau.—Time, Morning.—*

*MANFRED alone upon the Cliffs.*

*Man.* The spirits I have raised abandon me,  
The spells which I have studied baffle me,  
The remedy I reck'd of tortured me ;  
I lean no more on superhuman aid ;  
It hath no power upon the past, and for  
The future, till the past be gulf'd in darkness,  
It is not of my search.—My mother Earth !  
And thou fresh breaking Day, and you, ye Mountains,  
Why are ye beautiful ? I cannot love ye.  
And thou, the bright eye of the universe,  
That openest over all, and unto all  
Art a delight—thou shin'st not on my heart.  
And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme edge  
I stand, and on the torrent's brink beneath  
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs  
In dizziness of distance ; when a leap,  
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would bring  
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed  
To rest for ever—wherefore do I pause ?  
I feel the impulse—yet I do not plunge ;  
I see the peril—yet do not recede ;  
✓ And my brain reels—and yet my foot is firm :  
There is a power upon me which withholds,  
And makes it my fatality to live,—

10

20



If it be life to wear within myself  
 This barrenness of spirit, and to be  
 My own soul's sepulchre, for I have ceased

✓ To justify my deeds unto myself—  
 The last infirmity of evil. Ay,  
 Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minister, 30  
*[An eagle passes.]*

Whose happy flight is highest into heaven,  
 Well may'st thou swoop so near me—I should be  
 Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets; thou art gone  
 Where the eye cannot follow thee; but thine  
 Yet pierces downward, onward, or above,  
 With a pervading vision.—Beautiful!  
 How beautiful is all this visible world!  
 How glorious in its action and itself!

But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,  
 Half dust, half deity, alike unfit 40  
 To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence make  
 A conflict of its elements, and breathe  
 The breath of degradation and of pride,  
 Contending with low wants and lofty will,  
 Till our mortality predominates,  
 And men are—what they name not to themselves,  
 And trust not to each other. Hark! the note,

*[The Shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard]*

The natural music of the mountain reed—  
 For here the patriarchal days are not  
 A pastoral fable—pipes in the liberal air, 50  
 Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;  
 My soul would drink those echoes. Oh, that I were  
 The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,  
 A living voice, a breathing harmony,  
 A bodiless enjoyment—born and dying  
 With the blest tone which made me!

*Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.*

*Chamois Hunter.*

Even so

This way the chamois leapt: her nimble feet  
 Have baffled me; my gains to-day will scarce  
 Repay my break-neck travail.—What is here?



Who seems not of my trade, and yet hath reach'd 60  
 A height which none even of our mountaineers,  
 Save our best hunters, may attain : his garb  
 Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air  
 Proud as a free-born peasant's, at this distance :  
 I will approach him nearer.

*Man.* (*not perceiving the other*). To be thus—  
 Grey-hair'd with anguish, like these blasted pines,  
 Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless,  
 A blighted trunk upon a cursed root,  
 Which but supplies a feeling to decay—  
 And to be thus, eternally but thus, 70  
 Having been otherwise ! Now furrow'd o'er  
 With wrinkles, plough'd by moments,—not by years,—  
 And hours, all tortured into ages—hours  
 Which I outlive !—Ye toppling crags of ice !  
 Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down  
 In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me !  
 I hear ye momentarily above, beneath,  
 Crash with a frequent conflict ; but ye pass,  
 And only fall on things that still would live ;  
 On the young flourishing forest, or the hut 80  
 And hamlet of the harmless villager.

*C. Hun.* The mists begin to rise from up the valley ;  
 I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance  
 To lose at once his way and life together.

*Man.* The mists boil up around the glaciers ; clouds  
 Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,  
 Like foam from the roused ocean of deep Hell,  
 Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,  
 Heap'd with the damn'd like pebbles.—I am giddy.

*C. Hun.* I must approach him cautiously ; if near,  
 A sudden step will startle him, and he 91  
 Seems tottering already.

*Man.* Mountains have fallen,  
 Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock  
 Rocking their Alpine brethren ; filling up  
 The ripe green valleys with destruction's splinters ;  
 Damming the rivers with a sudden dash,  
 Which crush'd the waters into mist, and made

Their fountains find another channel—thus,  
Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosenberg—  
Why stood I not beneath it ?

*C. Hun.* Friend ! have a care, 100  
Your next step may be fatal !—for the love  
Of Him who made you, stand not on that brink !

*Man. (not hearing him).* Such would have been for  
me a fitting tomb ;  
My bones had then been quiet in their depth ;  
They had not then been strewn upon the rocks  
For the wind's pastime—as thus—thus they shall be—  
In this one plunge.—Farewell, ye opening heavens !  
Look not upon me thus reproachfully—

You were not meant for me—Earth ! take these atoms !  
[*As MANFRED is in act to spring from the cliff,  
the CHAMOIS HUNTER seizes and retains him  
with a sudden grasp.*]

*C. Hun.* Hold, madman !—though aweary of thy  
life, 110  
Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood :  
Away with me—I will not quit my hold.

*Man.* I am most sick at heart—nay, grasp me not—  
I am all feebleness—the mountains whirl  
Spinning around me—I grow blind—What art  
thou ?

*C. Hun.* I'll answer that anon.—Away with me—  
The clouds grow thicker—there—now lean on me—  
Place your foot here—here, take this staff, and cling  
A moment to that shrub—now give me your hand,  
And hold fast by my girdle—softly—well— 120  
The Chalet will be gain'd within an hour :  
Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing,  
And something like a pathway, which the torrent  
Hath wash'd since winter.—Come, 'tis bravely done—  
You should have been a hunter.—Follow me.

[*As they descend the rocks with difficulty, the  
scene closes.*]



## ACT II

SCENE I.—*A Cottage amongst the Bernese Alps.*

MANFRED and the CHAMOIS HUNTER.

*C. Hun.* No, no—yet pause—thou must not yet go forth :

Thy mind and body are alike unfit  
To trust each other, for some hours, at least ;  
When thou art better, I will be thy guide—  
But whither ?

*Man.* It imports not : I do know  
My route full well, and need no further guidance.

*C. Hun.* Thy garb and gait bespeak thee of high lineage—

One of the many chiefs, whose castled crags  
Look o'er the lower valleys—which of these  
May call thee lord ? I only know their portals ;      10  
My way of life leads me but rarely down  
To bask by the huge hearths of those old halls,  
Carousing with the vassals ; but the paths,  
Which step from out our mountains to their doors,  
I know from childhood—which of these is thine ?

*Man.* No matter.

*C. Hun.* Well, sir, pardon me the question,  
And be of better cheer. Come, taste my wine ;  
'Tis of an ancient vintage ; many a day  
'T has thaw'd my veins among our glaciers, now  
Let it do thus for thine—Come, pledge me fairly.      20

*Man.* Away, away ! there's blood upon the brim !  
Will it then never—never sink in the earth ?

*C. Hun.* What dost thou mean ? thy senses wander  
from thee.

*Man.* I say 'tis blood—my blood ! the pure warm  
stream

Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and in ours  
When we were in our youth, and had one heart,  
And loved each other as we should not love,  
And this was shed : but still it rises up,  
Colouring the clouds, that shut me out from heaven,



Where thou art not—and I shall never be. 30

*C. Hun.* Man of strange words, and some half-maddening sin,

Which makes thee people vacancy, whate'er  
Thy dread and sufferance be, there's comfort yet—  
The aid of holy men, and heavenly patience—

*Man.* Patience and patience! Hence—that word  
was made

For brutes of burthen, not for birds of prey!  
Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine,—  
I am not of thine order.

*C. Hun.* Thanks to Heaven!  
I would not be of thine for the free fame  
Of William Tell; but whatsoe'er thine ill, 40  
It must be borne, and these wild starts are useless.

*Man.* Do I not bear it?—Look on me—I live.

*C. Hun.* This is convulsion, and no healthful life.

*Man.* I tell thee, man! I have lived many years,  
Many long years, but they are nothing now  
To those which I must number: ages—ages—  
Space and eternity—and consciousness,  
With the fierce thirst of death—and still unslaked!

*C. Hun.* Why, on thy brow the seal of middle  
age

Hath scarce been set; I am thine elder far. 50

*Man.* Think'st thou existence doth depend on  
time?

It doth; but actions are our epochs: mine  
Have made my days and nights imperishable,  
Endless, and all alike, as sands on the shore,  
Innumerable atoms; and one desert,  
Barren and cold, on which the wild waves break,  
But nothing rests, save carcasses and wrecks,  
Rocks, and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness.

*C. Hun.* Alas! he's mad—but yet I must not  
leave him.

*Man.* I would I were—for then the things I see  
Would be but a distemper'd dream.

*C. Hun.* What is it 61  
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st upon?

*Man.* Myself, and thee—a peasant of the Alps—  
Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,  
And spirit patient, pious, proud, and free ;  
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts ;  
Thy days of health, and nights of sleep ; thy toils,  
By danger dignified, yet guiltless ; hopes  
Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,  
With cross and garland over its green turf, 70  
And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph ;  
This do I see—and then I look within—  
It matters not—my soul was scorch'd already !

*C. Hun.* And wouldst thou then exchange thy lot  
for mine ?

*Man.* No, friend ! I would not wrong thee, nor  
exchange  
My lot with living being : I can bear—  
However wretchedly, 'tis still to bear—  
In life what others could not brook to dream,  
But perish in their slumber.

*C. Hun.* And with this— 80  
This cautious feeling for another's pain,  
Canst thou be black with evil ?—say not so.  
Can one of gentle thoughts have wreak'd revenge  
Upon his enemies ?

*Man.* Oh ! no, no, no !  
My injuries came down on those who loved me—  
On those whom I best loved : I never quell'd  
An enemy, save in my just defence—  
But my embrace was fatal.

*C. Hun.* Heaven give thee rest !  
And penitence restore thee to thyself ;  
My prayers shall be for thee.

*Man.* I need them not—  
But can endure thy pity. I depart— 90  
'Tis time—farewell !—Here's gold, and thanks for  
thee—

No words—it is thy due.—Follow me not—  
I know my path—the mountain peril's past :  
And once again I charge thee, follow not !

[Exit MANFRED.]



## SCENE II

*A lower Valley in the Alps.—A Cataract.*

*Enter MANFRED.*

It is not noon—the sunbow's rays still arch  
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,  
And roll the sheeted silver's waving column  
O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,  
And fling its lines of foaming light along,  
And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,  
The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death,  
As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes  
But mine now drink this sight of loveliness ;  
I should be sole in this sweet solitude,  
And with the Spirit of the place divide  
The homage of these waters.—I will call her.

10

[MANFRED takes some of the water into the palm of his hand, and flings it into the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the WITCH OF THE ALPS rises beneath the arch of the sunbow of the torrent.

Beautiful Spirit ! with thy hair of light,  
And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form  
The charms of earth's least mortal daughters grow  
To an unearthly stature, in an essence  
Of purer elements ; while the hues of youth,—  
Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,  
Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,  
Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves  
Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow,  
The blush of earth embracing with her heaven,—  
Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame  
The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee.  
Beautiful Spirit ! in thy calm clear brow,  
Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul,  
Which of itself shows immortality,  
I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son  
Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit  
At times to commune with them—if that he

20

30



Avail him of his spells—to call thee thus,  
And gaze on thee a moment.

*Witch.* Son of Earth !  
I know thee, and the powers which give thee power ;  
I know thee for a man of many thoughts,  
And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,  
Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.  
I have expected this—what wouldst thou with me ?

*Man.* To look upon thy beauty—nothing further.  
The face of the earth hath madden'd me, and I  
Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce  
To the abodes of those who govern her—  
But they can nothing aid me. I have sought  
From them what they could not bestow, and now  
I search no further.

*Witch.* What could be the quest  
Which is not in the power of the most powerful,  
The rulers of the invisible ?

*Man.* A boon ;  
But why should I repeat it ? 'twere in vain.

*Witch.* I know not that ; let thy lips utter it.

*Man.* Well, though it torture me, 'tis but the same ;  
My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards  
My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men,  
Nor look'd upon the earth with human eyes ;  
The thirst of their ambition was not mine,  
The aim of their existence was not mine ;  
My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my powers,  
Made me a stranger ; though I wore the form,  
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,  
Nor midst the creatures of clay that girded me  
Was there but one who—but of her anon.  
I said with men, and with the thoughts of men,  
I held but slight communion ; but instead,  
My joy was in the wilderness,—to breathe  
The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,  
Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's wing  
Flit o'er the herbless granite ; or to plunge  
Into the torrent, and to roll along  
On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave

Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow.  
In these my early strength exulted ; or  
To follow through the night the moving moon, 70  
The stars and their development ; or catch  
The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim ;  
Or to look, list'ning, on the scatter'd leaves,  
While Autumn winds were at their evening song.  
These were my pastimes, and to be alone ;  
For if the beings, of whom I was one,—  
Hating to be so,—cross'd me in my path,  
I felt myself degraded back to them,  
And was all clay again. And then I dived,  
In my lone wanderings, to the caves of death, 80  
Searching its cause in its effect ; and drew  
From wither'd bones, and skulls, and heap'd up dust,  
Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd  
The nights of years in sciences untaught,  
Save in the old time ; and with time and toil,  
And terrible ordeal, and such penance  
As in itself hath power upon the air,  
And spirits that do compass air and earth,  
Space, and the peopled infinite, I made  
Mine eyes familiar with Eternity, 90  
Such as, before me, did the Magi, and  
He who from out their fountain dwellings raised  
Eros and Anteros, at Gadara,  
As I do thee ;—and with my knowledge grew  
The thirst of knowledge, and the power and joy  
Of this most bright intelligence, until—

*Witch.* Proceed.

*Man.* Oh ! I but thus prolong'd my words,  
Boasting these idle attributes, because  
As I approach the core of my heart's grief—  
But to my task. I have not named to thee 100  
Father or mother, mistress, friend, or being,  
With whom I wore the chain of human ties ;  
If I had such, they seem'd not such to me—  
Yet there was one—

*Witch.* Spare not thyself—proceed.

*Man.* She was like me in lineaments ; her eyes,



Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone  
Even of her voice, they said were like to mine;  
But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty:  
She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,  
The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind 110  
To comprehend the universe: nor these  
Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine,  
Pity, and smiles, and tears—which I had not;  
And tenderness—but that I had for her;  
Humility—and that I never had.  
Her faults were mine—her virtues were her own—  
I loved her, and destroy'd her!

*Witch.* With thy hand?

*Man.* Not with my hand, but heart, which broke  
her heart;

It gazed on mine, and wither'd. I have shed  
Blood, but not hers—and yet her blood was shed;  
I saw—and could not stanch it.

*Witch.* And for this— 121

A being of the race thou dost despise,  
The order, which thine own would rise above,  
Mingling with us and ours,—thou dost forgo  
The gifts of our great knowledge, and shrink'st back  
To recreant mortality—Away!

*Man.* Daughter of Air! I tell thee, since that  
hour—

But words are breath—look on me in my sleep,  
Or watch my watchings—Come and sit by me!  
My solitude is solitude no more, 130  
But peopled with the Furies;—I have gnash'd  
My teeth in darkness till returning morn,  
Then curs'd myself till sunset;—I have pray'd  
For madness as a blessing—'tis denied me.  
I have affronted death—but in the war  
Of elements the waters shrunk from me,  
And fatal things pass'd harmless; the cold hand  
Of an all-pitiless demon held me back,  
Back by a single hair, which would not break.  
In fantasy, imagination, all 140  
The affluence of my soul—which one day was



A Cræsus in creation—I plunged deep,  
 But, like an ebbing wave, it dash'd me back  
 Into the gulf of my unfathom'd thought.  
 I plunged amidst mankind—Forgetfulness  
 I sought in all, save where 'tis to be found,  
 And that I have to learn ;—my sciences,  
 My long-pursued and superhuman art,  
 Is mortal here : I dwell in my despair—  
 And live—and live for ever.

*Witch.* It may be 150  
 That I can aid thee.

*Man.* To do this thy power  
 Must wake the dead, or lay me low with them.  
 Do so—in any shape—in any hour—  
 With any torture—so it be the last.

*Witch.* That is not in my province ; but if thou  
 Wilt swear obedience to my will, and do  
 My bidding, it may help thee to thy wishes.

*Man.* I will not swear—Obey ! and whom ? the  
 spirits  
 Whose presence I command, and be the slave  
 Of those who served me—Never !

*Witch.* Is this all ? 160  
 Hast thou no gentler answer ?—Yet bethink thee,  
 And pause ere thou rejectest.

*Man.* I have said it.

*Witch.* Enough ! I may retire then—say !

*Man.* Retire !

[*The WITCH disappears.*]

*Man. (alone).* We are the fools of time and terror :  
 Days

Steal on us, and steal from us ; yet we live,  
 Loathing our life, and dreading still to die.  
 In all the days of this detested yoke—  
 This vital weight upon the struggling heart,  
 Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick with pain,  
 Or joy that ends in agony or faintness— 170  
 In all the days of past and future, for  
 In life there is no present, we can number  
 How few—how less than few—wherein the soul

Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws back  
 As from a stream in winter, though the chill  
 Be but a moment's. I have one resource  
 Still in my science—I can call the dead,  
 And ask them what it is we dread to be.  
 The sternest answer can but be the Grave,  
 And that is nothing: if they answer not— 180  
 The buried Prophet answered to the Hag  
 Of Endor; and the Spartan Monarch drew  
 From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping spirit  
 An answer and his destiny—he slew  
 That which he loved, unknowing what he slew,  
 And died unpardon'd—though he call'd in aid  
 The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia roused  
 The Arcadian Evocators to compel  
 The indignant shadow to depose her wrath,  
 Or fix her term of vengeance—she replied 190  
 In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd.  
 If I had never lived, that which I love  
 Had still been living; had I never loved,  
 That which I love would still be beautiful,  
 Happy and giving happiness. What is she?  
 What is she now?—a sufferer for my sins—  
 A thing I dare not think upon—or nothing.  
 Within few hours I shall not call in vain—  
 Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare:  
 Until this hour I never shrunk to gaze 200  
 On spirit, good or evil—now I tremble,  
 And feel a strange cold thaw upon my heart.  
 But I can act even what I most abhor,  
 And champion human fears.—The night approaches.  
 [Exit.

## SCENE III

*The Summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.*

*Enter FIRST DESTINY.*

The moon is rising broad, and round, and bright;  
 And here on snows, where never human foot  
 Of common mortal trod, we nightly tread,  
 And leave no traces: o'er the savage sea,



The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,  
 We skim its rugged breakers, which put on  
 The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,  
 Frozen in a moment—a dead whirlpool's image :  
 And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,  
 The fretwork of some earthquake—where the clouds  
 Pause to repose themselves in passing by— 11  
 Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils ;  
 Here do I wait my sisters, on our way  
 To the Hall of Arimanes, for to-night  
 Is our great festival—'tis strange they come not.

*A Voice without, singing*

The Captive Usurper,  
 Hurl'd down from the throne,  
 Lay buried in torpor,  
 Forgotten and lone ;  
 I broke through his slumbers, 20  
 I shiver'd his chain,  
 I leagued him with numbers—  
 He's Tyrant again !

With the blood of a million he'll answer my care,  
 With a nation's destruction—his flight and despair.

*Second Voice, without*

The ship sail'd on, the ship sail'd fast,  
 But I left not a sail, and I left not a mast ;  
 There is not a plank of the hull or the deck,  
 And there is not a wretch to lament o'er his wreck ;  
 Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by the hair, 30  
 And he was a subject well worthy my care ;  
 A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea—  
 But I saved him to wreak further havoc for me !

*FIRST DESTINY, answering*

The city lies sleeping ;  
 The morn, to deplore it,  
 May dawn on it weeping :  
 Sullenly, slowly,



The black plague flew o'er it—  
 Thousands lie lowly ;  
 Tens of thousands shall perish ;  
 The living shall fly from  
 The sick they should cherish ;  
 But nothing can vanquish  
 The touch that they die from.  
 Sorrow and anguish,  
 And evil and dread,  
 Envelope a nation ;  
 The blest are the dead,  
 Who see not the sight  
 Of their own desolation,  
 This work of a night—

40

50

This wreck of a realm—this deed of my doing—  
 For ages I've done, and shall still be renewing !

*Enter the SECOND and THIRD DESTINIES.*

*The Three*

Our hands contain the hearts of men,  
 Our footsteps are their graves ;  
 We only give to take again  
 The spirits of our slaves !

*First Des.* Welcome !—Where 's Nemesis ?

*Second Des.* At some great work ;

But what I know not, for my hands were full.

*Third Des.* Behold she cometh.

*Enter NEMESIS.*

*First Des.*

Say, where hast thou been ?

My sisters and thyself are slow to-night.

61

*Nem.* I was detain'd repairing shatter'd thrones,  
 Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,  
 Avenging men upon their enemies,  
 And making them repent their own revenge ;  
 Goading the wise to madness ; from the dull  
 Shaping out oracles to rule the world

Afresh, for they were waxing out of date,  
 And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,  
 To weigh kings in the balance, and to speak 70  
 Of freedom, the forbidden fruit.—Away !  
 We have outstay'd the hour—mount we our clouds !  
[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE IV

*The Hall of Arimanes—Arimanes on his Throne,  
 a Globe of Fire, surrounded by the Spirits*

*Hymn of the SPIRITS.*

Hail to our Master !—Prince of Earth and Air !  
 Who walks the clouds and waters—in his hand  
 The sceptre of the elements, which tear  
 Themselves to chaos at his high command !  
 He breatheth—and a tempest shakes the sea ;  
 He speaketh—and the clouds reply in thunder ;  
 He gazeth—from his glance the sunbeams flee ;  
 He moveth—earthquakes rend the world asunder.  
 Beneath his footsteps the volcanoes rise ;  
 His shadow is the Pestilence ; his path 10  
 The comets herald through the crackling skies ;  
 And planets turn to ashes at his wrath.  
 To him War offers daily sacrifice ;  
 To him Death pays his tribute ; Life is his,  
 With all its infinite of agonies—  
 And his the spirit of whatever is !

*Enter the DESTINIES and NEMESIS.*

*First Des.* Glory to Arimanes ! on the earth  
 His power increaseth—loth my sisters did  
 His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty !

*Second Des.* Glory to Arimanes ! we who bow 20  
 The necks of men, bow down before his throne !

*Third Des.* Glory to Arimanes ! we await  
 His nod !

*Nem.* Sovereign of Sovereigns ! we are thine,

And all that liveth, more or less, is ours,  
 And most things wholly so ; still to increase  
 Our power, increasing thine, demands our care,  
 And we are vigilant. Thy late commands  
 Have been fulfill'd to the utmost.

*Enter MANFRED.*

*A Spirit.*

What is here ?

A mortal !—Thou most rash and fatal wretch,  
 Bow down and worship !

*Second Spirit.*

I do know the man—

30

A Magian of great power, and fearful skill !

*Third Spirit.* Bow down and worship, slave !—

What, know'st thou not  
 Thine and our Sovereign ?—Tremble, and obey !

*All the Spirits.* Prostrate thyself, and thy con-  
 demned clay,

Child of the Earth ! or dread the worst.

*Man.*

I know it ;

And yet ye see I kneel not.

*Fourth Spirit.*

'Twill be taught thee.

*Man.* 'Tis taught already ;—many a night on the  
 earth,

On the bare ground, have I bow'd down my face,  
 And strew'd my head with ashes ; I have known  
 The fulness of humiliation, for  
 I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt  
 To my own desolation.

*Fifth Spirit.*

Dost thou dare

Refuse to Arimanes on his throne  
 What the whole earth accords, beholding not  
 The terror of his glory ?—Crouch ! I say.

*Man.* Bid him bow down to that which is above him,  
 The overruling Infinite—the Maker  
 Who made him not for worship—let him kneel,  
 And we will kneel together.

*The Spirits.*

Crush the worm !

Tear him in pieces !—

*First Des.*

Hence ! Avaunt !—he's mine. 50



Prince of the Powers invisible ! This man  
 Is of no common order, as his port  
 And presence here denote ; his sufferings  
 Have been of an immortal nature, like  
 Our own ; his knowledge, and his powers and will,  
 As far as is compatible with clay,  
 Which clogs the ethereal essence, have been such  
 As clay hath seldom borne ; his aspirations  
 Have been beyond the dwellers of the earth,  
 And they have only taught him what we know— 60  
 That knowledge is not happiness, and science  
 But an exchange of ignorance for that  
 Which is another kind of ignorance.

This is not all—the passions, attributes  
 Of earth and heaven, from which no power, nor  
 being,

Nor breath from the worm upwards is exempt,  
 Have pierced his heart, and in their consequence  
 Made him a thing which I, who pity not,  
 Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine,  
 And thine, it may be ; be it so, or not, 70  
 No other Spirit in this region hath  
 A soul like his—or power upon his soul.

*Nem.* What doth he here then ?

*First Des.* Let him answer that.

*Man.* Ye know what I have known ; and without  
 power

I could not be amongst ye : but there are  
 Powers deeper still beyond—I come in quest  
 Of such, to answer unto what I seek.

*Nem.* What wouldst thou ?

*Man.* Thou canst not reply to me.  
 Call up the dead—my question is for them.

*Nem.* Great Arimanes, doth thy will avouch 80  
 The wishes of this mortal ?

*Ari.* Yea.

*Nem.* Whom wouldst thou  
 Uncharnel ?

*Man.* One without a tomb—call up  
 Astarte.

## NEMESIS

Shadow ! or Spirit !

Whatever thou art,  
Which still doth inherit  
The whole or a part  
Of the form of thy birth,  
Of the mould of thy clay,  
Which return'd to the earth,  
Re-appear to the day !  
Bear what thou borest,  
The heart and the form,  
And the aspect thou worest  
Redeem from the worm.

Appear !—Appear !—Appear !

Who sent thee there requires thee here !

*[The Phantom of ASTARTE rises and  
stands in the midst.]*

*Man.* Can this be death ? there's bloom upon her  
cheek ;

But now I see it is no living hue,  
But a strange hectic—like the unnatural red  
Which Autumn plants upon the perish'd leaf.  
It is the same ! Oh, God ! that I should dread  
To look upon the same—Astarte !—No,  
I cannot speak to her—but bid her speak—  
Forgive me or condemn me.

## NEMESIS

By the power which hath broken  
The grave which enthrall'd thee,  
Speak to him who hath spoken,  
Or those who have call'd thee !

*Man.*

She is silent,

And in that silence I am more than answer'd.

*Nem.* My power extends no further. Prince of Air !  
It rests with thee alone—command her voice.

*Ari.* Spirit—obey this sceptre !

*Nem.*

Silent still !

She is not of our order, but belongs  
To the other powers. Mortal ! thy quest is vain,



And we are baffled also.

*Man.*

Hear me, hear me—

Astarte ! my beloved ! speak to me :

I have so much endured—so much endure—

Look on me ! the grave hath not changed thee more  
Than I am changed for thee. Thou lovedst me 120

Too much, as I loved thee : we were not made

To torture thus each other, though it were

The deadliest sin to love as we have loved.

Say that thou loath'st me not—that I do bear

This punishment for both—that thou wilt be

One of the blessed—and that I shall die ;

For hitherto all hateful things conspire

To bind me in existence—in a life

Which makes me shrink from immortality—

✓ A future like the past. I cannot rest. 130

I know not what I ask, nor what I seek :

I feel but what thou art, and what I am ;

And I would hear yet once before I perish

The voice which was my music—Speak to me !

For I have call'd on thee in the still night,

Startled the slumbering birds from the hush'd boughs,

And woke the mountain wolves, and made the caves

Acquainted with thy vainly echoed name,

Which answer'd me—many things answer'd me—

Spirits and men—but thou wert silent all. 140

Yet speak to me ! I have outwatch'd the stars,

And gazed o'er heaven in vain in search of thee.

Speak to me ! I have wander'd o'er the earth,

And never found thy likeness—Speak to me !

Look on the fiends around—they feel for me :

I fear them not, and feel for thee alone—

Speak to me ! though it be in wrath ;—but say—

I reckon not what—but let me hear thee once—

This once—once more !

*Phantom of Astarte.* Manfred !

*Man.*

Say on, say on—

I live but in the sound—it is thy voice ! 150

*Phan.* Manfred ! To-morrow ends thine earthly ills.  
Farewell !



*Man.* Yet one word more—am I forgiven ?

*Phan.* Farewell !

*Man.* Say, shall we meet again ?  
*Phan.* Farewell !

*Man.* One word for mercy ! Say, thou lovest me.

*Phan.* Manfred !

*[The Spirit of ASTARTE disappears.]*

*Nem.* She's gone, and will not be recall'd ;  
 Her words will be fulfill'd. Return to the earth.

*A Spirit.* He is convulsed.—This is to be a mortal,  
 And seek the things beyond mortality.

*Another Spirit.* Yet, see, he mastereth himself, and  
 makes

His torture tributary to his will.

Had he been one of us, he would have made  
 An awful spirit.

*Nem.* Hast thou further question  
 Of our great sovereign, or his worshippers ?

*Man.* None.

*Nem.* Then for a time farewell.

*Man.* We meet then ! Where ? On the earth ?—  
 Even as thou wilt : and for the grace accorded  
 I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well !

*[Exit MANFRED.]*

*(Scene closes.)*

### ACT III

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.*

MANFRED and HERMAN.

*Man.* What is the hour ?

*Her.* It wants but one till sunset,  
 And promises a lovely twilight.

*Man.* Say,  
 Are all things so disposed of in the tower  
 As I directed ?

*Her.* All, my lord, are ready :  
 Here is the key and casket.

*Man.* It is well :

Thou may'st retire. [Exit HERMAN.

*Man. (alone).* There is a calm upon me—  
Inexplicable stillness! which till now  
Did not belong to what I knew of life.  
If that I did not know philosophy  
To be of all our vanities the motliest, 10  
The merest word that ever fool'd the ear  
From out the schoolman's jargon, I should deem  
The golden secret, the sought 'Kalon', found,  
And seated in my soul. It will not last,  
But it is well to have known it, though but once:  
It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,  
And I within my tablets would note down  
That there is such a feeling. Who is there?

*Re-enter HERMAN.*

*Her.* My lord, the abbot of St. Maurice craves  
To greet your presence.

*Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.*

*Abbot.* Peace be with Count Manfred! 20

*Man.* Thanks, holy father! welcome to these walls;  
Thy presence honours them, and blesseth those  
Who dwell within them.

*Abbot.* Would it were so, Count!—  
But I would fain confer with thee alone.

*Man.* Herman, retire.—What would my reverend  
guest?

*Abbot.* Thus, without prelude:—Age and zeal, my  
office,  
And good intent must plead my privilege;  
Our near, though not acquainted neighbourhood,  
May also be my herald. Rumours strange, 30  
And of unholy nature, are abroad,  
And busy with thy name; a noble name  
For centuries: may he who bears it now  
Transmit it unimpair'd!

*Man.* Proceed,—I listen.

*Abbot.* 'Tis said thou holdest converse with the  
things



Which are forbidden to the search of man ;  
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,  
The many evil and unheavenly spirits  
Which walk the valley of the shade of death,  
Thou communest. I know that with mankind,  
Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely  
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude  
Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.

40

*Man.* And what are they who do avouch these things ?

*Abbot.* My pious brethren—the scared peasantry—  
Even thy own vassals—who do look on thee  
With most unquiet eyes. Thy life's in peril.

*Man.* Take it.

*Abbot.* I come to save, and not destroy :  
I would not pry into thy secret soul ;  
But if these things be sooth, there still is time  
For penitence and pity : reconcile thee  
With the true church, and through the church to  
Heaven.

50

*Man.* I hear thee. This is my reply : whate'er  
I may have been, or am, doth rest between  
Heaven and myself. I shall not choose a mortal  
To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd  
Against your ordinances ? prove and punish !

*Abbot.* My son ! I did not speak of punishment,  
But penitence and pardon ;—with thyself  
The choice of such remains—and for the last,  
Our institutions and our strong belief  
Have given me power to smooth the path from sin  
To higher hope and better thoughts ; the first  
I leave to Heaven,—' Vengeance is mine alone !'  
So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness  
His servant echoes back the awful word.

60

*Man.* Old man ! there is no power in holy men,  
Nor charm in prayer, nor purifying form  
Of penitence, nor outward look, nor fast,  
Nor agony—nor, greater than all these,  
The innate tortures of that deep despair,  
Which is remorse without the fear of hell.

70



But all in all sufficient to itself  
Would make a hell of heaven—can exorcise  
From out the unbounded spirit the quick sense  
Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and revenge  
Upon itself ; there is no future pang  
Can deal that justice on the self-condemn'd  
He deals on his own soul.

*Abbot.* All this is well ;  
For this will pass away, and be succeeded  
By an auspicious hope, which shall look up 80  
With calm assurance to that blessed place,  
Which all who seek may win, whatever be  
Their earthly errors, so they be atoned :  
And the commencement of atonement is  
'The sense of its necessity. Say on—  
And all our church can teach thee shall be taught ;  
And all we can absolve thee shall be pardon'd.

*Man.* When Rome's sixth emperor was near his last,  
The victim of a self-inflicted wound,  
To shun the torments of a public death 90  
From senates once his slaves, a certain soldier,  
With show of loyal pity, would have stanch'd  
The gushing throat with his officious robe ;  
The dying Roman thrust him back, and said—  
Some empire still in his expiring glance—  
'It is too late—is this fidelity ?'

*Abbot.* And what of this ?

*Man.* I answer with the Roman—  
'It is too late !'

*Abbot.* It never can be so,  
To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,  
And thy own soul with Heaven. Hast thou no hope ?  
'Tis strange—even those who do despair above, 101  
Yet shape themselves some fantasy on earth,  
To which frail twig they cling, like drowning men.

*Man.* Aye—father ! I have had those earthly visions,  
And noble aspirations in my youth,  
To make my own the mind of other men,  
The enlightener of nations ; and to rise  
I knew not whither—it might be to fall ;

But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,  
Which having leapt from its more dazzling height,  
Even in the foaming strength of its abyss, 111  
(Which casts up misty columns that become  
Clouds raining from the re-ascended skies,)  
Lies low but mighty still.—But this is past,  
My thoughts mistook themselves.

*Abbot.* And wherefore so ?

*Man.* I could not tame my nature down ; for he  
Must serve who fain would sway ; and soothe, and sue,  
And watch all time, and pry into all place,  
And be a living lie, who would become  
A mighty thing amongst the mean,—and such 120  
The mass are ; I disdain'd to mingle with  
A herd, though to be leader—and of wolves.  
The lion is alone, and so am I.

*Abbot.* And why not live and act with other men ?

*Man.* Because my nature was averse from life :  
And yet not cruel ; for I would not make,  
But find a desolation. Like the wind,  
The red-hot breath of the most lone simoom,  
Which dwells but in the desert, and sweeps o'er  
The barren sands which bear no shrubs to blast, 130  
And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,  
And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,  
But being met is deadly,—such hath been  
The course of my existence ; but there came  
Things in my path which are no more.

*Abbot.* Alas !

I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid  
From me and from my calling ; yet so young,  
I still would—

*Man.* Look on me ! there is an order  
Of mortals on the earth, who do become  
Old in their youth, and die ere middle age, 140  
Without the violence of warlike death ;  
Some perishing of pleasure, some of study,  
Some worn with toil, some of mere weariness,  
Some of disease, and some insanity,  
And some of wither'd, or of broken hearts ;



For this last is a malady which slays  
 More than are number'd in the lists of Fate,  
 Taking all shapes, and bearing many names.  
 Look upon me ! for even of all these things  
 Have I partaken ; and of all these things,  
 One were enough ; then wonder not that I  
 Am what I am, but that I ever was,  
 Or having been, that I am still on earth.

150

*Abbot.* Yet, hear me still——

*Man.* Old man ! I do respect  
 Thine order, and revere thine years ; I deem  
 Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain :  
 Think me not churlish ; I would spare thyself,  
 Far more than me, in shunning at this time  
 All further colloquy—and so—farewell.

[*Exit* MANFRED.]

*Abbot.* This should have been a noble creature : he  
 Hath all the energy which would have made  
 A goodly frame of glorious elements,  
 Had they been wisely mingled ; as it is,  
 It is an awful chaos—light and darkness,—  
 And mind and dust,—and passions and pure thoughts  
 Mix'd, and contending without end or order,—  
 All dormant or destructive : he will perish,  
 And yet he must not ; I will try once more.  
 For such are worth redemption ; and my duty  
 Is to dare all things for a righteous end.  
 I'll follow him—but cautiously, though surely.

161

170

[*Exit* ABBOT.]

## SCENE II

*Another Chamber.*

MANFRED and HERMAN.

*Her.* My lord, you bade me wait on you at sunset :  
 He sinks behind the mountain.

*Man.* Doth he so ?  
 I will look on him. [MANFRED advances to the Window  
 of the Hall.]

Glorious Orb ! the idol



Of early nature, and the vigorous race  
 Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons  
 Of the embrace of angels, with a sex  
 More beautiful than they, which did draw down  
 The erring spirits who can ne'er return.—  
 Most glorious orb ! that wert a worship, ere  
 The mystery of thy making was reveal'd ! 10  
 Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,  
 Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops, the hearts  
 Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they pour'd  
 Themselves in orisons ! Thou material God !  
 And representative of the Unknown—  
 Who chose thee for his shadow ! Thou chief star !  
 Centre of many stars ! which mak'st our earth  
 Endurable, and temperest the hues  
 And hearts of all who walk within thy rays !  
 Sire of the seasons ! Monarch of the climes, 20  
 And those who dwell in them ! for near or far,  
 Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee  
 Even as our outward aspects ;—thou dost rise,  
 And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee well !  
 I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first glance  
 Of love and wonder was for thee, then take  
 My latest look ; thou wilt not beam on one  
 To whom the gifts of life and warmth have been  
 Of a more fatal nature. He is gone :  
 I follow. [Exit MANFRED.

## SCENE III

*The Mountains—The Castle of Manfred at some distance—A Terrace before a Tower.—Time, Twilight.*

HERMAN, MANUEL, and other Dependants of  
 MANFRED.

*Her.* 'Tis strange enough ; night after night, for  
 years,  
 He hath pursued long vigils in this tower,  
 Without a witness. I have been within it,—  
 So have we all been oft-times ; but from it,

Or its contents, it were impossible  
To draw conclusions absolute, of aught  
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is  
One chamber where none enter: I would give  
The fee of what I have to come these three years,  
To pore upon its mysteries.

*Manuel.* 'Twere dangerous; 10  
Content thyself with what thou know'st already.

*Her.* Ah! Manuel! thou art elderly and wise,  
And couldst say much; thou hast dwelt within the  
castle—

How many years is 't?

*Manuel.* Ere Count Manfred's birth,  
I served his father, whom he nought resembles.

*Her.* There be more sons in like predicament.  
But wherein do they differ?

*Manuel.* I speak not  
Of features or of form, but mind and habits;  
Count Sigismund was proud, but gay and free,—  
A warrior and a reveller; he dwelt not 20  
With books and solitude, nor made the night  
A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,  
Merrier than day; he did not walk the rocks  
And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside  
From men and their delights.

*Her.* Beshrew the hour,  
But those were jocund times! I would that such  
Would visit the old walls again; they look  
As if they had forgotten them.

*Manuel.* These walls  
Must change their chieftain first. Oh! I have seen  
Some strange things in them, Herman.

*Her.* Come, be friendly; 30  
Relate me some to while away our watch:  
I've heard thee darkly speak of an event  
Which happen'd hereabouts, by this same tower.

*Manuel.* That was a night indeed! I do remember  
'Twas twilight, as it may be now, and such  
Another evening;—yon red cloud, which rests  
On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then,—



So like that it might be the same ; the wind  
 Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows  
 Began to glitter with the climbing moon ;  
 Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower,—  
 How occupied, we knew not, but with him  
 The sole companion of his wanderings  
 And watchings—her, whom of all earthly things  
 That lived, the only thing he seem'd to love,—  
 As he, indeed, by blood was bound to do,  
 The Lady Astarte, his—

40

Hush ! who comes here ?

*Enter the ABBOT.*

*Abbot.* Where is your master ?

*Her.*

Yonder in the tower.

*Abbot.* I must speak with him.

*Manuel.*

'Tis impossible ;

He is most private, and must not be thus  
 Intruded on.

50

*Abbot.* Upon myself I take  
 The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be—  
 But I must see him.

*Her.*

Thou hast seen him once

This eve already.

*Abbot.*

Herman ! I command thee,

Knock, and apprize the Count of my approach.

*Her.* We dare not.

*Abbot.*

Then it seems I must be herald

Of my own purpose.

*Manuel.*

Reverend father, stop—

I pray you pause.

*Abbot.*

Why so ?

*Manuel.*

But step this way,

And I will tell you further.

[*Exeunt.*]



## SCENE IV

*Interior of the Tower.*MANFRED *alone.*

The stars are forth, the moon above the tops  
Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beautiful!  
I linger yet with Nature, for the Night  
Hath been to me a more familiar face  
Than that of man; and in her starry shade  
Of dim and solitary loveliness,  
I learn'd the language of another world.  
I do remember me, that in my youth,  
When I was wandering,—upon such a night  
I stood within the Coliseum's wall,  
'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;  
The trees which grew along the broken arches  
Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars  
Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar  
The watch-dog bay'd beyond the Tiber; and  
More near from out the Cæsars' palace came  
The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,  
Of distant sentinels the fitful song  
Begun and died upon the gentle wind.  
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach  
Appear'd to skirt the horizon, yet they stood  
Within a bowshot. Where the Cæsars dwelt,  
And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst  
A grove which springs through levell'd battlements,  
And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,  
Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth;  
But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,  
A noble wreck in ruinous perfection,  
While Cæsar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,  
Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.  
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon  
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,  
Which soften'd down the hoar austerity  
Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,  
As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries;

10

20

30

Leaving that beautiful which still was so,  
 And making that which was not, till the place  
 Became religion, and the heart ran o'er  
 With silent worship of the great of old,—  
 The dead but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule      40  
 Our spirits from their urns.

'Twas such a night !

'Tis strange that I recall it at this time ;  
 But I have found our thoughts take wildest flight  
 Even at the moment when they should array  
 Themselves in pensive order.

*Enter the ABBOT*

*Abbot.*      My good lord !  
 I crave a second grace for this approach ;  
 But yet let not my humble zeal offend  
 By its abruptness—all it hath of ill  
 Recoils on me ; its good in the effect  
 May light upon your head—could I say *heart*—      50  
 Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers, I should  
 Recall a noble spirit which hath wander'd,  
 But is not yet all lost.

*Man.*      Thou know'st me not ;  
 My days are number'd, and my deeds recorded :  
 Retire, or 'twill be dangerous—Away !

*Abbot.* Thou dost not mean to menace me ?  
*Man.*      Not I ;

I simply tell thee peril is at hand,  
 And would preserve thee.

*Abbot.*      What dost thou mean ?  
*Man.*      Look there !

What dost thou see ?

*Abbot.*      Nothing.

*Man.*      Look there, I say,  
 And stedfastly ;—now tell me what thou seest ?      60

*Abbot.* That which should shake me, but I fear it  
 not :

I see a dusk and awful figure rise,  
 Like an infernal god, from out the earth ;  
 His face wrapt in a mantle, and his form



Robed as with angry clouds : he stands between  
Thyself and me—but I do fear him not.

*Man.* Thou hast no cause—he shall not harm thee—  
but

His sight may shock thine old limbs into palsy.  
I say to thee—Retire !

*Abbot.*

And I reply—

Never—till I have battled with this fiend :—  
What doth he here ?

70

*Man.*

Why—aye—what doth he here ?

I did not send for him,—he is unbidden.

*Abbot.* Alas ! lost mortal ! what with guests like  
these

Hast thou to do ? I tremble for thy sake :  
Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on him ?  
Ah ! he unveils his aspect : on his brow  
The thunder-scars are graven : from his eye  
Glares forth the immortality of hell—

Avaunt !—

*Man.* Pronounce—what is thy mission ?

*Spirit.*

Come !

*Abbot.* What art thou, unknown being ? answer !—  
speak !

80

*Spirit.* The genius of this mortal.—Come ! 'tis time.

*Man.* I am prepared for all things, but deny  
The power which summons me. Who sent thee here ?

*Spirit.* Thou'lt know anon—Come ! come !

*Man.*

I have commanded  
Things of an essence greater far than thine,  
And striven with thy masters. Get thee hence !

*Spirit.* Mortal ! thine hour is come—Away ! I say.

*Man.* I knew, and know my hour is come, but not  
To render up my soul to such as thee :

Away ! I'll die as I have lived—alone.

90

*Spirit.* Then I must summon up my brethren.—  
Rise !

[*Other Spirits rise up.*

*Abbot.* Avaunt ! ye evil ones !—Avaunt ! I say ;  
Ye have no power where piety hath power,  
And I do charge ye in the name——



*Spirit.*

Old man !

We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order ;  
Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,  
It were in vain : this man is forfeited.

Once more I summon him—Away ! Away !

*Man.* I do defy ye,—though I feel my soul  
Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye ;  
Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath  
To breathe my scorn upon ye—earthly strength  
To wrestle, though with spirits ; what ye take  
Shall be ta'en limb by limb.

100

*Spirit.*

Reluctant mortal !

Is this the Magian who would so pervade  
The world invisible, and make himself  
Almost our equal ? Can it be that thou  
Art thus in love with life ? the very life  
Which made thee wretched ?

*Man.*

Thou false fiend, thou liest !

My life is in its last hour,—*that* I know,  
Nor would redeem a moment of that hour ;  
I do not combat against death, but thee  
And thy surrounding angels ; my past power  
Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,  
But by superior science—penance, daring,  
And length of watching, strength of mind, and skill  
In knowledge of our fathers—when the earth  
Saw men and spirits walking side by side,  
And gave ye no supremacy : I stand  
Upon my strength—I do defy—deny—  
Spurn back, and scorn ye !—

110

120

*Spirit.*

But thy many crimes

Have made thee——

*Man.*

What are they to such as thee ?

Must crimes be punish'd but by other crimes,  
And greater criminals ?—Back to thy hell !  
Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel ;  
Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know :  
What I have done is done ; I bear within  
A torture which could nothing gain from thine :  
The mind which is immortal makes itself

Requital for its good or evil thoughts,—130  
Is its own origin of ill and end—  
And its own place and time : its innate sense,  
When stripp'd of this mortality, derives  
No colour from the fleeting things without,  
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,  
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.  
*Thou* didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not tempt  
me ;

I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey—  
But was my own destroyer, and will be  
My own hereafter.—Back, ye baffled fiends !—140  
The hand of death is on me—but not yours !

*[The Demons disappear.]*

*Abbot.* Alas ! how pale thou art—thy lips are white—  
And thy breast heaves—and in thy gasping throat  
The accents rattle : Give thy prayers to Heaven—  
Pray—albeit but in thought,—but die not thus.

*Man.* 'Tis over—my dull eyes can fix thee not ;  
But all things swim around me, and the earth  
Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well !  
Give me thy hand.

*Abbot.* Cold—cold—even to the heart—  
But yet one prayer—Alas ! how fares it with thee ?

*Man.* Old man ! 'tis not so difficult to die. 151

*[MANFRED expires.]*

*Abbot.* He's gone—his soul hath ta'en its earthless  
flight ;  
Whither ? I dread to think—but he is gone.



## MARINO FALIERO, DOGE OF VENICE

From *Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice*.

## ACT V. SCENE III

*The Court of the Ducal Palace ; the outer gates are shut against the people.—The DOGE enters in his ducal robes, in procession with the Council of Ten and other Patricians, attended by the Guards, till they arrive at the top of the 'Giants' Staircase' (where the Doges took the oaths) ; the Executioner is stationed there with his sword.—On arriving, a Chief of the Ten takes off the ducal cap from the Doge's head.*

*Doge.* So now the Doge is nothing, and at last I am again Marino Faliero :

'Tis well to be so, though but for a moment.  
Here was I crown'd, and here, bear witness, Heaven !  
With how much more contentment I resign  
That shining mockery, the ducal bauble,  
Than I received the fatal ornament.

*One of the Ten.* Thou tremblest, Faliero !

*Doge.* 'Tis with age, then.

*Ben.* Faliero ! hast thou aught further to commend,  
Compatible with justice, to the senate ? 10

*Doge.* I would commend my nephew to their mercy,  
My consort to their justice ; for methinks  
My death, and such a death, might settle all  
Between the state and me.

*Ben.* They shall be cared for ;  
Even notwithstanding thine unheard-of crime.

*Doge.* Unheard of ! aye, there 's not a history  
But shows a thousand crown'd conspirators  
Against the people ; but to set them free,  
One sovereign only died, and one is dying. 19

*Ben.* And who were they who fell in such a cause ?

*Doge.* The King of Sparta and the Doge of Venice—  
Agis and Faliero !

*Ben.* Hast thou more  
To utter or to do ?



*Doge.* May I speak ?

*Ben.* Thou may'st ;

But recollect the people are without,  
Beyond the compass of the human voice.

*Doge.* I speak to Time and to Eternity,  
Of which I grow a portion, not to man.  
Ye elements ! in which to be resolved  
I hasten, let my voice be as a spirit  
Upon you ! Ye blue waves ! which bore my banner,  
Ye winds ! which flutter'd o'er as if you loved it, 31  
And fill'd my swelling sails as they were wafted  
To many a triumph ! Thou, my native earth,  
Which I have bled for ! and thou, foreign earth,  
Which drank this willing blood from many a wound !  
Ye stones, in which my gore will not sink, but  
Reek up to heaven ! Ye skies, which will receive it !  
Thou sun ! which shinest on these things, and Thou !  
Who kindlest and who quenchest suns !—Attest !  
I am not innocent—but are these guiltless ? 40  
I perish, but not unavenged : far ages  
Float up from the abyss of time to be,  
And show these eyes, before they close, the doom  
Of this proud city, and I leave my curse  
On her and hers for ever !—Yes, the hours  
Are silently engendering of the day,  
When she, who built 'gainst Attila a bulwark,  
Shall yield, and bloodlessly and basely yield,  
Unto a bastard Attila, without  
Shedding so much blood in her last defence, 50  
As these old veins, oft drain'd in shielding her,  
Shall pour in sacrifice.—She shall be bought  
And sold, and be an appanage to those  
Who shall despise her !—She shall stoop to be  
A province for an empire, petty town  
In lieu of capital, with slaves for senates,  
Beggars for nobles, panders for a people !  
Then when the Hebrew's in thy palaces,  
The Hun in thy high places, and the Greek  
Walks o'er thy mart, and smiles on it for his : 60  
When thy patricians beg their bitter bread

In narrow streets, and in their shameful need  
 Make their nobility a plea for pity ;  
 Then, when the few who still retain a wreck  
 Of their great fathers' heritage shall fawn  
 Round a barbarian Vice of Kings' Vicegerent,  
 Even in the palace where they sway'd as sovereigns,  
 Even in the palace where they slew their sovereign,  
 Proud of some name they have disgraced, or sprung  
 From an adulteress boastful of her guilt 70  
 With some large gondolier or foreign soldier,  
 Shall bear about their bastardy in triumph  
 To the third spurious generation ;—when  
 Thy sons are in the lowest scale of being,  
 Slaves turn'd o'er to the vanquish'd by the victors,  
 Despised by cowards for greater cowardice,  
 And scorn'd even by the vicious for such vices  
 As in the monstrous grasp of their conception  
 Defy all codes to image or to name them ;  
 Then, when of Cyprus, now thy subject kingdom, 80  
 All thine inheritance shall be her shame  
 Entail'd on thy less virtuous daughters, grown  
 A wider proverb for worse prostitution ;—  
 When all the ills of conquer'd states shall cling thee,  
 Vice without splendour, sin without relief  
 Even from the gloss of love to smooth it o'er,  
 But in its stead, coarse lusts of habitude,  
 Prurient yet passionless, cold studied lewdness,  
 Depraving nature's frailty to an art ;—  
 When these and more are heavy on thee, when 90  
 Smiles without mirth, and pastimes without pleasure,  
 Youth without honour, age without respect,  
 Meanness and weakness, and a sense of woe  
 'Gainst which thou wilt not strive, and dar'st not  
 murmur,  
 Have made thee last and worst of peopled deserts,  
 Then, in the last gasp of thine agony,  
 Amidst thy many murders, think of *mine* !  
 Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes !  
 Gehenna of the waters ! thou sea Sodom !  
 Thus I devote thee to the infernal gods ! 100



Thee and thy serpent seed !

*[Here the DOGE turns and addresses the Executioner.]*

Slave, do thine office !

Strike as I struck the foe ! Strike as I would

Have struck those tyrants ! Strike deep as my curse !

Strike—and but once !

*[The DOGE throws himself upon his knees, and as the Executioner raises his sword the scene closes.]*

## THE SWIMMER

*(From The Two Foscari, I. i)*

How many a time have I  
 Cloven with arm still lustier, breast more daring,  
 The wave all roughen'd ; with a swimmer's stroke  
 Flinging the billows back from my drench'd hair,  
 And laughing from my lip the audacious brine,  
 Which kiss'd it like a wine-cup, rising o'er  
 The waves as they arose, and prouder still  
 The loftier they uplifted me ; and oft,  
 In wantonness of spirit, plunging down  
 Into their green and glassy gulfs, and making 10  
 My way to shells and sea-weed, all unseen  
 By those above, till they wax'd fearful ; then  
 Returning with my grasp full of such tokens  
 As show'd that I had search'd the deep : exulting,  
 With a far-dashing stroke, and drawing deep  
 The long-suspended breath, again I spurn'd  
 The foam which broke around me, and pursued  
 My track like a sea-bird.—I was a boy then.



## CAIN : A MYSTERY

## ACT II

SCENE I.—*The Abyss of Space*

*Cain.* I tread on air, and sink not ; yet I fear  
To sink.

*Lucifer.* Have faith in me, and thou shalt be  
Borne on the air, of which I am the prince.

*Cain.* Can I do so without impiety ?

*Lucifer.* Believe—and sink not ! doubt—and  
perish ! thus

Would run the edict of the other God,  
Who names me demon to his angels ; they  
Echo the sound to miserable things,  
Which, knowing nought beyond their shallow senses,  
Worship the word which strikes their ear, and deem  
Evil or good what is proclaim'd to them 11  
In their abasement. I will have none such :  
Worship or worship not, thou shalt behold  
The worlds beyond thy little world, nor be  
Amerced for doubts beyond thy little life,  
With torture of *my* dooming. There will come  
An hour, when, toss'd upon some water-drops,  
A man shall say to a man, ' Believe in me,  
And walk the waters ; ' and the man shall walk  
The billows and be safe. I will not say, 20  
Believe in *me*, as a conditional creed  
To save thee ; but fly with me o'er the gulf  
Of space an equal flight, and I will show  
What thou dar'st not deny,—the history  
Of past, and present, and of future worlds.

*Cain.* Oh, god, or demon, or whate'er thou art,  
Is yon our earth ?

*Lucifer.* Dost thou not recognise

The dust which form'd your father ?

*Cain.* Can it be ?

Yon small blue circle, swinging in far ether,  
With an inferior circlet near it still, 30  
Which looks like that which lit our earthly night ?  
Is this our Paradise ? Where are its walls,  
And they who guard them ?

*Lucifer.* Point me out the site  
Of Paradise.

*Cain.* How should I ? As we move  
Like sunbeams onward, it grows small and smaller,  
And as it waxes little, and then less,  
Gathers a halo round it, like the light  
Which shone the roundest of the stars, when I  
Beheld them from the skirts of Paradise :  
Methinks they both, as we recede from them, 40  
Appear to join the innumerable stars  
Which are around us ; and, as we move on,  
Increase their myriads.

*Lucifer.* And if there should be  
Worlds greater than thine own, inhabited  
By greater things, and they themselves far more  
In number than the dust of thy dull earth,  
Though multiplied to animated atoms,  
All living, and all doom'd to death, and wretched,  
What wouldst thou think ?

*Cain.* I should be proud of thought  
Which knew such things.

*Lucifer.* But if that high thought were  
Link'd to a servile mass of matter, and, 51  
Knowing such things, aspiring to such things,  
And science still beyond them, were chain'd down  
To the most gross and petty paltry wants,  
All foul and fulsome, and the very best  
Of thine enjoyments a sweet degradation,  
A most enervating and filthy cheat  
To lure thee on to the renewal of  
Fresh souls and bodies, all foredoom'd to be  
As frail, and few so happy——

*Cain.* Spirit ! I



Know nought of death, save as a dreadful thing  
 Of which I have heard my parents speak, as of  
 A hideous heritage I owe to them  
 No less than life ; a heritage not happy,  
 If I may judge, till now. But, spirit ! if  
 It be as thou hast said (and I within  
 Feel the prophetic torture of its truth),  
 Here let me die : for to give birth to those  
 Who can but suffer many years, and die,  
 Methinks is merely propagating death,  
 And multiplying murder.

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*Lucifer.* Thou canst not

*All die*—there is what must survive.

*Cain.* The Other

Spake not of this unto my father, when  
 He shut him forth from Paradise, with death  
 Written upon his forehead. But at least  
 Let what is mortal of me perish, that  
 I may be in the rest as angels are.

*Lucifer.* I am angelic : wouldst thou be as I am ?

*Cain.* I know not what thou art : I see thy  
 power,

And see thou show'st me things beyond *my* power,  
 Beyond all power of my born faculties,  
 Although inferior still to my desires  
 And my conceptions.

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*Lucifer.* What are they which dwell  
 So humbly in their pride, as to sojourn  
 With worms in clay ?

*Cain.* And what art thou who dwellest  
 So haughtily in spirit, and canst range  
 Nature and immortality—and yet  
 Seem'st sorrowful ?

*Lucifer.* I seem that which I am ;  
 And therefore do I ask of thee, if thou  
 Wouldst be immortal ?

*Cain.* Thou hast said I must be 90  
 Immortal in despite of me. I knew not  
 This until lately—but since it must be,  
 Let me, or happy or unhappy, learn



To anticipate my immortality.

*Lucifer.* Thou didst before I came upon thee.

*Cain.* How ?

*Lucifer.* By suffering.

*Cain.* And must torture be immortal ?

*Lucifer.* We and thy sons will try. But now, behold !

Is it not glorious ?

*Cain.* Oh, thou beautiful

And unimaginable ether ! and

Ye multiplying masses of increased 100

And still increasing lights ! what are ye ? what

Is this blue wilderness of interminable

Air, where ye roll along, as I have seen

The leaves along the limpid streams of Eden ?

Is your course measured for ye ? Or do ye

Sweep on in your unbounded revelry

Through an ærial universe of endless

Expansion—at which my soul aches to think—

Intoxicated with eternity ?

O God ! O Gods ! or whatsoe'er ye are ! 110

How beautiful ye are ! how beautiful

Your works, or accidents, or whatsoe'er

They may be ! Let me die, as atoms die

(If that they die), or know ye in your might

And knowledge ! My thoughts are not in this hour

Unworthy what I see, though my dust is ;

Spirit ! let me expire, or see them nearer.

*Lucifer.* Art thou not nearer ? look back to thine earth !

*Cain.* Where is it ? I see nothing save a mass

Of most innumerable lights.

*Lucifer.* Look there ! 120

*Cain.* I cannot see it.

*Lucifer.* Yet it sparkles still.

*Cain.* That !—yonder !

*Lucifer.* Yea.

*Cain.* And wilt thou tell me so ?

Why, I have seen the fire-flies and fire-worms

Sprinkle the dusky groves and the green banks

In the dim twilight, brighter than yon world  
Which bears them.

*Lucifer.*, Thou hast seen both worms and worlds,  
Each bright and sparkling—what dost think of them?

*Cain.* That they are beautiful in their own sphere,  
And that the night, which makes both beautiful,  
The little shining fire-fly in its flight, 130  
And the immortal star in its great course,  
Must both be guided.

*Lucifer.* But by whom or what?

*Cain.* Show me.

*Lucifer.* Dar'st thou behold?

*Cain.* How know I what

I dare behold? As yet, thou hast shown nought  
I dare not gaze on further.

*Lucifer.* On, then, with me.

### ACT III

SCENE I.—*The Earth, near Eden, as in Act I.*

*Enter CAIN and ADAH.*

*Adah.* Hush, tread softly, Cain.

*Cain.* I will; but wherefore?

*Adah.* Our little Enoch sleeps upon yon bed  
Of leaves, beneath the cypress.

*Cain.* Cypress! 'tis  
A gloomy tree, which looks as if it mourn'd  
O'er what it shadows; wherefore didst thou choose it  
For our child's canopy?

*Adah.* Because its branches  
Shut out the sun like night, and therefore seem'd  
Fitting to shadow slumber.

*Cain.* Ay, the last—  
And longest; but no matter—lead me to him.  
[*They go up to the child.*

How lovely he appears! his little cheeks, 10  
In their pure incarnation, vying with



The rose leaves strewn beneath them.

*Adah.* And his lips, too,  
How beautifully parted ! No ; you shall not  
Kiss him, at least not now : he will awake soon.  
His hour of mid-day rest is nearly over ;  
But it were pity to disturb him till  
'Tis closed.

*Cain.* You have said well ; I will contain  
My heart till then. He smiles, and sleeps !—Sleep on,  
And smile, thou little, young inheritor 19  
Of a world scarce less young : sleep on, and smile !  
Thine are the hours and days when both are cheering  
And innocent ! *thou* hast not pluck'd the fruit—  
Thou know'st not thou art naked ! Must the time  
Come thou shalt be amerced for sins unknown,  
Which were not thine nor mine ? But now sleep on !  
His cheeks are reddening into deeper smiles,  
And shining lids are trembling o'er his long  
Lashes, dark as the cypress which waves o'er them ;  
Half open, from beneath them the clear blue  
Laughs out, although in slumber. He must dream—  
Of what ? Of Paradise !—Ay ! dream of it, 31  
My disinherited boy ! 'Tis but a dream ;  
For never more thyself, thy sons, nor fathers,  
Shall walk in that forbidden place of joy !

*Adah.* Dear Cain ! Nay, do not whisper o'er our son  
Such melancholy yearnings o'er the past :  
Why wilt thou always mourn for Paradise ?  
Can we not make another ?

*Cain.* Where ?

*Adah.* Here, or  
Where'er thou wilt : where'er thou art, I feel not  
The want of this so much regretted Eden. 40  
Have I not thee, our boy, our sire, and brother,  
And Zillah—our sweet sister, and our Eve,  
To whom we owe so much besides our birth ?

*Cain.* Yes—death, too, is amongst the debts we  
owe her.

*Adah.* Cain ! that proud spirit, who withdrew thee  
hence,



Hath sadden'd thine still deeper. I had hoped  
 The promised wonders which thou hast beheld,  
 Visions, thou say'st, of past and present worlds,  
 Would have composed thy mind into the calm  
 Of a contented knowledge; but I see 50  
 Thy guide hath done thee evil: still I thank him,  
 And can forgive him all, that he so soon  
 Hath given thee back to us.

*Cain.* So soon?

*Adah.* 'Tis scarcely  
 Two hours since ye departed: two *long* hours  
 To *me*, but only *hours* upon the sun.

*Cain.* And yet I have approach'd that sun, and seen  
 Worlds which he once shone on, and never more  
 Shall light; and worlds he never lit: methought  
 Years had roll'd o'er my absence.

*Adah.* Hardly hours.

*Cain.* The mind then hath capacity of time, 60  
 And measures it by that which it beholds,  
 Pleasing or painful; little or almighty.  
 I had beheld the immemorial works  
 Of endless beings; skirr'd extinguish'd worlds;  
 And, gazing on eternity, methought  
 I had borrow'd more by a few drops of ages  
 From its immensity: but now I feel  
 My littleness again. Well said the spirit,  
 That I was nothing!

*Adah.* Wherefore said he so?

Jehovah said not that.

*Cain.* No: *he* contents him 70  
 With making us the *nothing* which we are;  
 And after flattering dust with glimpses of  
 Eden and Immortality, resolves  
 It back to dust again—for what?

*Adah.* Thou know'st—

Even for our parents' error.

*Cain.* What is that  
 To us? they sinn'd, then *let them* die!

*Adah.* Thou hast not spoken well, nor is that  
 thought

Thy own, but of the spirit who was with thee.  
Would *I* could die for them, so *they* might live !

*Cain.* Why, so say I—provided that one victim  
Might satiate the insatiable of life, 81  
And that our little rosy sleeper there  
Might never taste of death nor human sorrow,  
Nor hand it down to those who spring from him.

*Adah.* How know we that some such atonement  
one day  
May not redeem our race ?

*Cain.* By sacrificing  
The harmless for the guilty ? what atonement  
Were there ? why, *we* are innocent : what have we  
Done, that we must be victims for a deed  
Before our birth, or need have victims to 90  
Atone for this mysterious, nameless sin—  
If it be such a sin to seek for knowledge ?

*Adah.* Alas ! thou sinnest now, my Cain : thy words  
Sound impious in mine ears.

*Cain.* Then leave me !

*Adah.* Never,  
Though thy God left thee.

*Cain.* Say, what have we here ?

*Adah.* Two altars, which our brother Abel made  
During thine absence, whereupon to offer  
A sacrifice to God on thy return.

*Cain.* And how knew *he*, that *I* would be so ready  
With the burnt offerings, which he daily brings 100  
With a meek brow, whose base humility  
Shows more of fear than worship, as a bribe  
To the Creator ?

*Adah.* Surely, 'tis well done.

*Cain.* One altar may suffice ; *I* have no offering.

*Adah.* The fruits of the earth, the early, beautiful  
Blossom and bud, and bloom of flowers and fruits ;  
These are a goodly offering to the Lord,  
Given with a gentle and a contrite spirit.

*Cain.* I have toil'd, and till'd, and sweaten in the  
sun,  
According to the curse :—must I do more ? 110



For what should I be gentle ? for a war  
 With all the elements ere they will yield  
 The bread we eat ? For what must I be grateful ?  
 For being dust, and grovelling in the dust,  
 Till I return to dust ? If I am nothing—  
 For nothing shall I be an hypocrite,  
 And seem well-pleased with pain ? For what should I  
 Be contrite ? for my father's sin, already  
 Expiate with what we all have undergone,  
 And to be more than expiated by 120  
 The ages prophesied, upon our seed.  
 Little deems our young blooming sleeper, there,  
 The germs of an eternal misery  
 To myriads is within him ! better 'twere  
 I snatch'd him in his sleep, and dash'd him 'gainst  
 The rocks, than let him live to——

*Adah.* Oh, my God !

Touch not the child—my child ! *thy* child ! Oh, Cain !

*Cain.* Fear not ! for all the stars, and all the power  
 Which sways them, I would not accost yon infant  
 With ruder greeting than a father's kiss. 130

*Adah.* Then, why so awful in thy speech ?

*Cain.* I said,

'Twere better that he ceased to live, than give  
 Life to so much of sorrow as he must  
 Endure, and, harder still, bequeath ; but since  
 That saying jars you, let us only say—  
 'Twere better that he never had been born.

*Adah.* Oh, do not say so ! Where were then the  
 joys,

The mother's joys of watching, nourishing,  
 And loving him ? Soft ! he awakes. Sweet Enoch !  
 [She goes to the child.

Oh, Cain ! look on him ; see how full of life, 140  
 Of strength, of bloom, of beauty, and of joy,  
 How like to me—how like to thee, when gentle,  
 For *then* we are *all* alike ; is't not so, Cain ?  
 Mother, and sire, and son, our features are  
 Reflected in each other ; as they are  
 In the clear waters, when *they* are gentle, and



When *thou* art gentle. Love us, then, my Cain !  
 And love thyself for our sakes, for we love thee.  
 Look ! how he laughs and stretches out his arms,  
 And opens wide his blue eyes upon thine, 150  
 To hail his father ; while his little form  
 Flutters as wing'd with joy. Talk not of pain !  
 The childless cherubs well might envy thee  
 The pleasures of a parent ! Bless him, Cain !  
 As yet he hath no words to thank thee, but  
 His heart will, and thine own too.

*Cain.* Bless thee, boy !  
 If that a mortal blessing may avail thee,  
 To save thee from the serpent's curse !

*Adah.* It shall.  
 Surely a father's blessing may avert  
 A reptile's subtlety.

*Cain.* Of that I doubt ; 160  
 But bless him ne'er the less.

*Adah.* Our brother comes.

*Cain.* Thy brother Abel.

*Enter ABEL.*

*Abel.* Welcome, Cain ! My brother,  
 The peace of God be on thee !

*Cain.* Abel, hail !

*Abel.* Our sister tells me that thou hast been  
 wandering,

In high communion with a spirit, far  
 Beyond our wonted range. Was he of those  
 We have seen and spoken with, like to our father ?

*Cain.* No.

*Abel.* Why then commune with him ? he may be  
 A foe to the Most High.

*Cain.* And friend to man.  
 Has the Most High been so—if so you term him ? 170

*Abel.* Term him ! your words are strange to-day,  
 my brother.

My sister Adah, leave us for awhile—  
 We mean to sacrifice.

*Adah.* Farewell, my Cain ;

But first embrace thy son. May his soft spirit,  
And Abel's pious ministry, recall thee  
To peace and holiness !

[Exit ADAH, with her child.  
Where hast thou been ?

Abel.

Cain. I know not.

Abel.

Nor what thou hast seen ?

Cain.

The dead,

The immortal, the unbounded, the omnipotent,

The overpowering mysteries of space—

The innumerable worlds that were and are— 180

A whirlwind of such overwhelming things,

Suns, moons, and earths, upon their loud-voiced spheres

Singing in thunder round me, as have made me

Unfit for mortal converse : leave me, Abel.

Abel. Thine eyes are flashing with unnatural light—

Thy cheek is flush'd with an unnatural hue—

Thy words are fraught with an unnatural sound—

What may this mean ?

Cain. It means—I pray thee, leave me.

Abel. Not till we have pray'd and sacrificed together.

Cain. Abel, I pray thee, sacrifice alone— 190  
Jehovah loves thee well.

Abel. Both well, I hope.

Cain. But thee the better : I care not for that ;  
Thou art fitter for his worship than I am ;  
Revere him, then—but let it be alone—  
At least, without me.

Abel. Brother, I should ill  
Deserve the name of our great father's son,  
If, as my elder, I revered thee not,  
And in the worship of our God, call'd not  
On thee to join me, and precede me in  
Our priesthood—'tis thy place.

Cain. But I have ne'er 200  
Asserted it.

Abel. The more my grief ; I pray thee  
To do so now : thy soul seems labouring in  
Some strong delusion ; it will calm thee.



*Cain.* No ;  
 Nothing can calm me more. *Calm !* say I ? Never .  
 Knew I what calm was in the soul, although  
 I have seen the elements still'd. My Abel, leave me !  
 Or let me leave thee to thy pious purpose.

*Abel.* Neither ; we must perform our task together.  
 Spurn me not.

*Cain.* If it must be so——well, then,  
 What shall I do ?

*Abel.* Choose one of those two altars. 210

*Cain.* Choose for me : they to me are so much turf  
 And stone.

*Abel.* Choose thou !

*Cain.* I have chosen.

*Abel.* 'Tis the highest,  
 And suits thee, as the elder. Now prepare  
 Thine offerings.

*Cain.* Where are thine ?

*Abel.* Behold them here—  
 The firstlings of the flock, and fat thereof—  
 A shepherd's humble offering.

*Cain.* I have no flocks ;  
 I am a tiller of the ground, and must  
 Yield what it yieldeth to my toil—its fruit :

*[He gathers fruits.]*  
 Behold them in their various bloom and ripeness.

*[They dress their altars, and kindle a flame  
 upon them.]*

*Abel.* My brother, as the elder, offer first 220  
 Thy prayer and thanksgiving with sacrifice.

*Cain.* No—I am new to this ; lead thou the way,  
 And I will follow—as I may.

*Abel (kneeling).* Oh, God !  
 Who made us, and who breathed the breath of life  
 Within our nostrils, who hath blessed us,  
 And spared, despite our father's sin, to make  
 His children all lost, as they might have been,  
 Had not thy justice been so temper'd with  
 The mercy which is thy delight, as to  
 Accord a pardon like a Paradise,



Compared with our great crimes :—Sole Lord of light,  
Of good, and glory, and eternity !  
Without whom all were evil, and with whom  
Nothing can err, except to some good end  
Of thine omnipotent benevolence—

Inscrutable, but still to be fulfill'd—  
Accept from out thy humble first of shepherds'  
First of the first-born flocks—an offering,  
In itself nothing—as what offering can be  
Aught unto thee ?—but yet accept it for  
The thanksgiving of him who spreads it in  
The face of thy high heaven, bowing his own  
Even to the dust, of which he is, in honour  
Of thee, and of thy name, for evermore !

240

*Cain (standing erect during this speech).*

Spirit ! whate'er or whosoe'er thou art,  
Omnipotent, it may be—and, if good,  
Shown in the exemption of thy deeds from evil ;  
Jehovah upon earth ! and God in heaven !  
And it may be with other names, because  
Thine attributes seem many, as thy works :—  
If thou must be propitiated with prayers,  
Take them ! If thou must be induced with altars,  
And soften'd with a sacrifice, receive them !  
Two beings here erect them unto thee.  
If thou lov'st blood, the shepherd's shrine, which

250

smokes

On my right hand, hath shed it for thy service  
In the first of his flock, whose limbs now reek  
In sanguinary incense to thy skies ;  
Or if the sweet and blooming fruits of earth,  
And milder seasons, which the unstain'd turf  
I spread them on now offers in the face  
Of the broad sun which ripen'd them, may seem  
Good to thee, inasmuch as they have not  
Suffer'd in limb or life, and rather form  
A sample of thy works, than supplication  
To look on ours ! If a shrine without victim,  
And altar without gore, may win thy favour,  
Look on it ! and for him who dresseth it,

260

He is—such as thou mad'st him ; and seeks nothing  
 Which must be won by kneeling : if he 's evil, 270  
 Strike him ! thou art omnipotent, and may'st—  
 For what can he oppose ? If he be good,  
 Strike him, or spare him, as thou wilt ! since all  
 Rests upon thee ; and good and evil seem  
 To have no power themselves, save in thy will ;  
 And whether that be good or ill I know not,  
 Not being omnipotent, nor fit to judge  
 Omnipotence, but merely to endure  
 Its mandate ; which thus far I have endured.

*[The fire upon the altar of ABEL kindles into a column  
 of the brightest flame, and ascends to heaven ; while  
 a whirlwind throws down the altar of CAIN, and  
 scatters the fruits abroad upon the earth.]*

*Abel (kneeling).* Oh, brother, pray ! Jehovah's  
 wroth with thee. 280

*Cain.* Why so ?

*Abel.* Thy fruits are scatter'd on the earth.

*Cain.* From earth they came, to earth let them  
 return ;

—Their seed will bear fresh fruit there ere the summer :  
 Thy burnt flesh-off'ring prospers better ; see  
 How heaven licks up the flames, when thick with blood !

*Abel.* Think not upon my offering's acceptance,  
 But make another of thine own before  
 It is too late.

*Cain.* I will build no more altars,  
 Nor suffer any——

*Abel (rising).* Cain ! what meanest thou ?

*Cain.* To cast down yon vile flatt'rer of the clouds,  
 The smoky harbinger of thy dull prayers— 291  
 Thine altar, with its blood of lambs and kids,  
 Which fed on milk, to be destroy'd in blood.

*Abel (opposing him).* Thou shalt not :—add not  
 impious works to impious  
 Words ! let that altar stand—'tis hallow'd now  
 By the immortal pleasure of Jehovah,  
 In his acceptance of the victims.

*Cain.*

*His !*



*His pleasure!* what was his high pleasure in  
 The fumes of scorching flesh and smoking blood,  
 To the pain of the bleating mothers, which 300  
 Still yearn for their dead offspring? or the pang  
 Of the sad ignorant victims underneath  
 Thy pious knife? Give way! this bloody record  
 Shall not stand in the sun, to shame creation!

*Abel.* Brother, give back! thou shalt not touch my  
 altar

With violence: if that thou wilt adopt it,  
 To try another sacrifice, 'tis thine.

*Cain.* Another sacrifice! Give way, or else  
 That sacrifice may be——

*Abel.* What mean'st thou?

*Cain.* Give——

Give way!—thy God loves blood!—then look to it:—  
 Give way, ere he hath *more!*

*Abel.* In *his* great name, 311  
 I stand between thee and the shrine which hath  
 Had his acceptance.

*Cain.* If thou lov'st thyself,  
 Stand back till I have strew'd this turf along  
 Its native soil:—else——

*Abel (opposing him).* I love God far more  
 Than life.

*Cain (striking him with a brand, on the temples, which  
 he snatches from the altar).*

Then take thy life unto thy God,  
 Since he loves lives.

*Abel (falls).* What hast thou done, my brother?

*Cain.* Brother!

*Abel.* Oh, God! receive thy servant, and  
 Forgive his slayer, for he knew not what 319  
 He did—Cain, give me—give me thy hand; and tell  
 Poor Zillah—

*Cain (after a moment's stupefaction).* My hand! 'tis  
 all red, and with——

What?

[A long pause.—Looking slowly round.  
 Where am I? alone! Where's Abel? where



Cain ? Can it be that I am he ? My brother,  
 Awake !—why liest thou so on the green earth ?  
 'Tis not the hour of slumber ;—why so pale ?  
 What hast thou !—thou wert full of life this morn !  
 Abel ! I pray thee, mock me not ! I smote  
 Too fiercely, but not fatally. Ah, why  
 Wouldst thou oppose me ? This is mockery ;  
 And only done to daunt me :—'twas a blow— 330  
 And but a blow. Stir—stir—nay, only stir !  
 Why, so—that 's well !—thou breath'st ! breathe upon  
 me !

Oh, God ! Oh, God !

*Abel (very faintly).* What 's he who speaks of  
 God ?

*Cain.* Thy murderer.

*Abel.* Then may God forgive him ! Cain,  
 Comfort poor Zillah :—she has but one brother  
 Now. [ABEL dies.]

*Cain.* And I none !—Who makes me brotherless ?  
 His eyes are open ! then he is not dead !  
 Death is like sleep ; and sleep shuts down our lids.  
 His lips, too, are apart ; why then he breathes ;  
 And yet I feel it not.—His heart !—his heart ! 340  
 Let me see, doth it beat ? methinks——No !—no !  
 This is a vision, else I am become  
 The native of another and worse world.  
 The earth swims round me :—what is this ?—'tis  
 wet ;

[Puts his hand to his brow, and then looks at it.]  
 And yet there are no dews ! 'Tis blood—my blood—  
 My brother's and my own ! and shed by me !  
 Then what have I further to do with life,  
 Since I have taken life from my own flesh ?  
 But he cannot be dead !—Is silence death ? 349  
 No ; he will wake ; then let me watch by him.  
 Life cannot be so slight, as to be quench'd  
 Thus quickly !—he hath spoken to me since—  
 What shall I say to him ?—My brother !—No :  
 He will not answer to that name ; for brethren  
 Smite not each other. Yet—yet—speak to me.

Oh ! for a word more of that gentle voice,  
That I may bear to hear my own again !

*Enter ZILLAH.*

*Zillah.* I heard a heavy sound ; what can it be ?  
'Tis Cain ; and watching by my husband. What 359  
Dost thou there, brother ? Doth he sleep ? Oh, heaven !  
What means this paleness, and yon stream ?—No, no !  
It is not blood ; for who would shed his blood ?  
Abel ! what 's this ?—who hath done this ? He moves  
not ;

He breathes not : and his hands drop down from mine  
With stony lifelessness ! Ah ! cruel Cain !  
Why cam'st thou not in time to save him from  
This violence ? Whatever hath assail'd him,  
Thou wert the stronger, and shouldst have stepp'd in  
Between him and aggression ! Father !—Eve !—  
Adah !—come hither ! Death is in the world ! 370

*[Exit ZILLAH, calling on her Parents, &c.]*

*Cain (solus).* And who hath brought him there ?—  
I—who abhor

The name of Death so deeply, that the thought  
Empoison'd all my life, before I knew  
His aspect—I have led him here, and given  
My brother to his cold and still embrace,  
As if he would not have asserted his  
Inexorable claim without my aid.  
I am awake at last—a dreary dream  
Had madden'd me ;—but *he* shall ne'er awake !

# FROM 'THE DEFORMED TRANSFORMED'

## THE TRANSFORMATION INTO THE SHAPE OF ACHILLES

BEAUTIFUL shadow  
 Of Thetis's boy !  
 Who sleeps in the meadow  
 Whose grass grows o'er Troy :  
 From the red earth, like Adam,  
 Thy likeness I shape,  
 As the being who made him,  
 Whose actions I ape.  
 Thou clay, be all glowing,  
 Till the rose in his cheek  
 Be as fair as, when blowing  
 It wears its first streak !  
 Ye violets, I scatter,  
 Now turn into eyes !  
 And thou, sunshiny water,  
 Of blood take the guise !  
 Let these hyacinth boughs  
 Be his long flowing hair,  
 And wave o'er his brows  
 As thou wavest in air !  
 Let his heart be this marble  
 I tear from the rock !  
 But his voice as the warble  
 Of birds on yon oak !  
 Let his flesh be the purest  
 Of mould, in which grew  
 The lily-root surest,  
 And drank the best dew !  
 Let his limbs be the lightest  
 Which clay can compound,  
 And his aspect the brightest  
 On earth to be found !

10

20

30



Elements, near me,  
 Be mingled and stirr'd,  
 Know me, and hear me,  
 And leap to my word !  
 Sunbeams, awaken  
 This earth's animation !  
 'Tis done ! He hath taken  
 His stand in creation !

40

## SONG OF THE SOLDIERS

The black bands came over  
 The Alps and their snow ;  
 With Bourbon, the rover,  
 They pass'd the broad Po.  
 We have beaten all foemen,  
 We have captured a king,  
 We have turn'd back on no men,  
 And so let us sing !  
 Here's the Bourbon for ever !  
 Though penniless all,  
 We'll have one more endeavour  
 At yonder old wall.  
 With the Bourbon we'll gather  
 At day-dawn before  
 The gates, and together  
 Or break or climb o'er  
 The wall : on the ladder  
 As mounts each firm foot,  
 Our shout shall grow gladder,  
 And death only be mute.  
 With the Bourbon we'll mount o'er  
 The walls of old Rome,  
 And who then shall count o'er  
 The spoils of each dome ?  
 Up ! up with the lily !  
 And down with the keys !  
 In old Rome, the seven-hilly,  
 We'll revel at ease.

10

20

Her streets shall be gory,  
 Her Tiber all red,  
 And her temples so hoary  
 Shall clang with our tread.  
 Oh, the Bourbon! the Bourbon!  
 The Bourbon for aye!  
 Of our song bear the burden!  
 And fire, fire away!  
 With Spain for the vanguard,  
 Our varied host comes;  
 And next to the Spaniard  
 Beat Germany's drums;  
 And Italy's lances  
 Are couch'd at their mother;  
 But our leader from France is,  
 Who warr'd with his brother.  
 Oh, the Bourbon! the Bourbon!  
 Sans country or home,  
 We'll follow the Bourbon,  
 To plunder old Rome.

30

40

## CHORUS OF SPIRITS IN THE AIR

## I

'Tis the morn, but dim and dark.  
 Whither flies the silent lark?  
 Whither shrinks the clouded sun?  
 Is the day indeed begun?  
 Nature's eye is melancholy  
 O'er the city high and holy:  
 But without there is a din  
 Should arouse the saints within,  
 And revive the heroic ashes  
 Round which yellow Tiber dashes.  
 Oh, ye seven hills! awaken,  
 Ere your very base be shaken!

10

II

Hearken to the steady stamp !  
 Mars is in their every tramp !  
 Not a step is out of tune,  
 As the tides obey the moon !  
 On they march, though to self-slaughter,  
 Regular as rolling water,  
 Whose high waves o'ersweep the border  
 Of huge moles, but keep their order,  
 Breaking only rank by rank.  
 Hearken to the armour's clank !  
 Look down o'er each frowning warrior,  
 How he glares upon the barrier :  
 Look on each step of each ladder,  
 As the stripes that streak an adder.

20

III

Look upon the bristling wall,  
 Mann'd without an interval !  
 Round and round, and tier on tier,  
 Cannon's black mouth, shining spear,  
 Lit match, bell-mouth'd musketoon,  
 Gaping to be murderous soon ;  
 All the warlike gear of old,  
 Mix'd with what we now behold,  
 In this strife 'twixt old and new,  
 Gather like a locusts' crew.  
 Shade of Remus ! 'tis a time  
 Awful as thy brother's crime !  
 Christians war against Christ's shrine :—  
 Must its lot be like to thine ?

30

40

IV

Near—and near—and nearer still,  
 As the earthquake saps the hill,  
 First with trembling, hollow motion,  
 Like a scarce awaken'd ocean,



Then with stronger shock and louder,  
 Till the rocks are crush'd to powder,—  
 Onward sweeps the rolling host !  
 Heroes of the immortal boast !  
 Mighty chiefs ! eternal shadows !  
 First flowers of the bloody meadows  
 Which encompass Rome, the mother  
 Of a people without brother !  
 Will you sleep when nations' quarrels  
 Plough the root up of your laurels ?  
 Ye who weep o'er Carthage burning,  
 Weep not—*strike* ! for Rome is mourning !

50

## V

Onward sweep the varied nations !  
 Famine long hath dealt their rations.  
 To the wall, with hate and hunger,  
 Numerous as wolves, and stronger,  
 On they sweep. Oh, glorious city !  
 Must thou be a theme for pity ?  
 Fight, like your first sire, each Roman !  
 Alaric was a gentle foeman,  
 Match'd with Bourbon's black banditti !  
 Rouse thee, thou eternal city ;  
 Rouse thee ! Rather give the torch  
 With thine own hand to thy porch,  
 Than behold such hosts pollute  
 Your worst dwelling with their foot.

60

70

## VI

Ah ! behold yon bleeding spectre !  
 Ilion's children find no Hector ;  
 Priam's offspring loved their brother ;  
 Rome's great sire forgot his mother,  
 When he slew his gallant twin,  
 With inexpressible sin.  
 See the giant shadow stride  
 O'er the ramparts high and wide !

When the first o'erleapt thy wall,  
 Its foundation mourn'd thy fall.  
 Now, though towering like a Babel,  
 Who to stop his steps are able ?  
 Stalking o'er thy highest dome,  
 Remus claims his vengeance, Rome !

80

## VII

Now they reach thee in their anger :  
 Fire and smoke and hellish clangour  
 Are around thee, thou world's wonder !  
 Death is in thy walls and under.  
 Now the meeting steel first clashes,  
 Downward then the ladder crashes,  
 With its iron load all gleaming,  
 Lying at its foot blaspheming !  
 Up again ! for every warrior  
 Slain, another climbs the barrier.  
 Thicker grows the strife : thy ditches  
 Europe's mingling gore enriches.  
 Rome ! although thy wall may perish,  
 Such manure thy fields will cherish,  
 Making gay the harvest-home ;  
 But thy hearths, alas ! oh, Rome !—  
 Yet be Rome amidst thine anguish,  
 Fight as thou wast wont to vanquish !

90

100

## VIII

Yet once more, ye old Penates !  
 Let not your quench'd hearths be Ató's !  
 Yet again, ye shadowy heroes,  
 Yield not to these stranger Neros !  
 Though the son who slew his mother  
 Shed Rome's blood, he was your brother ;  
 'Twas the Roman curb'd the Roman ;—  
 Brennus was a baffled foeman.  
 Yet again, ye saints and martyrs,  
 Rise ! for yours are holier charters !  
 Mighty gods of temples falling,  
 Yet in ruin still appalling !

110

Mightier founders of those altars,  
 True and Christian,—strike the assaulters !  
 Tiber ! Tiber ! let thy torrent  
 Show even nature's self abhorrent.  
 Let each breathing heart dilated  
 Turn, as doth the lion baited !  
 Rome be crush'd to one wide tomb,  
 But be still the Roman's Rome !

120

### CHORUS OF PEASANTS.

#### I

The wars are over,  
 The spring is come ;  
 The bride and her lover  
 Have sought their home :  
 They are happy, we rejoice ;  
 Let their hearts have an echo in every voice !

#### II

The spring is come ; the violet's gone,  
 The first-born child of the early sun :  
 With us she is but a winter's flower,  
 The snow on the hills cannot blast her bower,  
 And she lifts up her dewy eye of blue  
 To the youngest sky of the self-same hue.

11

#### III

And when the spring comes with her host  
 Of flowers, that flower beloved the most  
 Shrinks from the crowd that may confuse  
 Her heavenly odour and virgin hues.



IV

Pluck the others, but still remember  
 Their herald out of dim December—  
 The morning star of all the flowers,  
 The pledge of daylight's lengthen'd hours ; 20  
 Nor, midst the roses, e'er forget  
 The virgin, virgin violet.

*Enter CÆSAR.*

*Cæs. (singing).* The wars are all over,  
 Our swords are all idle,  
 The steed bites the bridle.  
 The casque's on the wall.  
 There's rest for the rover ;  
 But his armour is rusty,  
 And the veteran grows crusty,  
 As he yawns in the hall. 30  
 He drinks—but what's drinking ?  
 A mere pause from thinking !  
 No bugle awakes him with life-and-death call

*Chorus.*

But the hound bayeth loudly,  
 The boar's in the wood,  
 And the falcon longs proudly  
 To spring from her hood :  
 On the wrist of the noble  
 She sits like a crest,  
 And the air is in trouble 40  
 With birds from their nest.

*Cæs.* Oh ! shadow of glory !  
 Dim image of war !  
 But the chase hath no story,  
 Her hero no star,  
 Since Nimrod, the founder  
 Of empire and chase,  
 Who made the woods wonder  
 And quake for their race.

When the lion was young, 50  
 In the pride of his might,  
 Then 'twas sport for the strong  
 To embrace him in fight ;  
 To go forth, with a pine  
 For a spear, 'gainst the mammoth,  
 Or strike through the ravine  
 At the foaming behemoth ;  
 While man was in stature  
 As towers in our time,  
 The first-born of Nature, 60  
 And, like her, sublime !

*Chorus.*

But the wars are over,  
 The spring is come ;  
 The bride and her lover  
 Have sought their home ;  
 They are happy, and we rejoice ;  
 Let their hearts have an echo from every voice !  
*[Exeunt the Peasantry, singing.]*

## ITALY AND ENGLAND

(From *Beppo*, xli-xlix)

WITH all its sinful doings, I must say,  
 That Italy 's a pleasant place to me,  
 Who love to see the Sun shine every day,  
 And vines (not nail'd to walls) from tree to tree  
 Festoon'd, much like the back scene of a play,  
 Or melodrame, which people flock to see,  
 When the first act is ended by a dance  
 In vineyards copied from the south of France.

I like on Autumn evenings to ride out,  
 Without being forced to bid my groom be sure 10  
 My cloak is round his middle strapp'd about,  
 Because the skies are not the most secure ;

I know too that, if stopp'd upon my route,  
Where the green alleys windingly allure,  
Reeling with grapes red waggons choke the way,—  
In England 'twould be dung, dust, or a dray.

I also like to dine on becaficas,  
To see the Sun set, sure he'll rise to-morrow,  
Not through a misty morning twinkling weak as  
A drunken man's dead eye in maudlin sorrow, 20  
But with all Heaven t'himself; the day will break as  
Beauteous as cloudless, nor be forced to borrow  
That sort of farthing candlelight which glimmers  
Where reeking London's smoky caldron simmers.

I love the language, that soft bastard Latin,  
Which melts like kisses from a female mouth,  
And sounds as if it should be writ on satin,  
With syllables which breathe of the sweet South,  
And gentle liquids gliding all so pat in,  
That not a single accent seems uncouth, 30  
Like our harsh northern whistling, grunting guttural,  
Which we're obliged to hiss, and spit, and sputter all.

I like the women too (forgive my folly),  
From the rich peasant cheek of ruddy bronze,  
And large black eyes that flash on you a volley  
Of rays that say a thousand things at once,  
To the high dama's brow, more melancholy,  
But clear, and with a wild and liquid glance,  
Heart on her lips, and soul within her eyes,  
Soft as her clime, and sunny as her skies. 40

Eve of the land which still is Paradise !  
Italian beauty ! didst thou not inspire  
Raphael, who died in thy embrace, and vies  
With all we know of Heaven, or can desire,  
In what he hath bequeath'd us ?—in what guise,  
Though flashing from the fervour of the lyre,  
Would *words* describe thy past and present glow,  
While yet Canova can create below ?



✓ 'England ! with all thy faults I love thee still,'  
I said at Calais, and have not forgot it ;  
I like to speak and lucubrate my fill ;  
I like the government (but that is not it) ;  
I like the freedom of the press and quill ;  
I like the Habeas Corpus (when we've got it) ;  
I like a parliamentary debate,  
Particularly when 'tis not too late ;

50

I like the taxes, when they're not too many ;  
I like a seacoal fire, when not too dear ;  
I like a beef-steak, too, as well as any ;  
Have no objection to a pot of beer ;  
I like the weather, when it is not rainy,  
That is, I like two months of every year.  
And so God save the Regent, Church, and King !  
Which means that I like all and everything.

60

✓ Our standing army, and disbanded seamen,  
Poor's rate, Reform, my own, the nation's debt,  
Our little riots just to show we are free men,  
Our trifling bankruptcies in the Gazette,  
Our cloudy climate, and our chilly women,  
All these I can forgive, and those forget,  
And greatly venerate our recent glories,  
And wish they were not owing to the Tories.

70

Satire at society which transformed an impression-  
harming, idealizing youth into a hardened man of the  
world. The successive disillusionments of the hero are  
the real subject of the narrative.

## FROM 'DON JUAN'

Hatred of hypocrisy and cant of sentiment en-  
wants to correct. Not incentive for vice! No girl will  
ever be seduced by reading D.J.

I WANT a hero: an uncommon want,

When every year and month sends forth a new one,  
Till, after cloying the gazettes with cant,

The age discovers he is not the true one:  
Of such as these I should not care to vaunt,

I'll therefore take our ancient friend Don Juan—  
We all have seen him, in the pantomime,  
Sent to the devil somewhat ere his time.

Vernon, the butcher Cumberland, Wolfe, Hawke,  
Prince Ferdinand, Granby, Burgoyne, Keppel, Howe,  
Evil and good, have had their tithe of talk,

And fill'd their sign-posts then, like Wellesley now;  
Each in their turn like Banquo's monarchs stalk,

Followers of fame, 'nine farrow' of that sow:  
France, too, had Buonaparté and Dumourier  
Recorded in the Moniteur and Courier.

Barnave, Brissot, Condorcet, Mirabeau,  
Pétion, Clotz, Danton, Marat, La Fayette,  
Were French, and famous people, as we know;

And there were others, scarce forgotten yet,  
Joubert, Hoche, Marceau, Lannes, Desaix, Moreau,

With many of the military set,  
Exceedingly remarkable at times,  
But not at all adapted to my rhymes.

Nelson was once Britannia's god of war,  
And still should be so, but the tide is turn'd;  
There's no more to be said of Trafalgar,

'Tis with our hero quietly inurn'd:  
Because the army's grown more popular,

At which the naval people are concern'd,  
Besides, the prince is all for the land-service,  
Forgetting Duncan, Nelson, Howe, and Jervis.



Brave men were living before Agamemnon  
 And since, exceeding valorous and sage,  
 A good deal like him too, though quite the same none ;  
 But then they shone not on the poet's page,  
 And so have been forgotten :—I condemn none.  
 But can't find any in the present age  
 Fit for my poem (that is, for my new one) ;  
 So, as I said, I'll take my friend Don Juan.

40

## THE SWEETS OF LIFE

(CANTO I, cxxii—cxxvii)

'Tis sweet to hear  
 At midnight on the blue and moonlit deep  
 The song and oar of Adria's gondolier,  
 By distance mellow'd, o'er the waters sweep ;  
 'Tis sweet to see the evening star appear ;  
 'Tis sweet to listen as the night-winds creep  
 From leaf to leaf ; 'tis sweet to view on high  
 The rainbow, based on ocean, span the sky.

'Tis sweet to hear the watch-dog's honest bark  
 Bay deep-mouth'd welcome as we draw near home ;  
 'Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark  
 Our coming, and look brighter when we come ;  
 'Tis sweet to be awaken'd by the lark,  
 Or lull'd by falling waters ; sweet the hum  
 Of bees, the voice of girls, the song of birds,  
 The lisp of children, and their earliest words.

Sweet is the vintage, when the showering grapes  
 In Bacchanal profusion reel to earth,  
 Purple and gushing ; sweet are our escapes  
 From civic revelry to rural mirth ;  
 Sweet to the miser are his glittering heaps,  
 Sweet to the father is his first-born's birth,  
 Sweet is revenge—especially to women,  
 Pillage to soldiers, prize-money to seamen.

20



Sweet is a legacy, and passing sweet  
 The unexpected death of some old lady  
 Or gentleman of seventy years complete,  
 Who've made 'us youth' wait too—too long already  
 For an estate, or cash, or country seat,  
 Still breaking, but with stamina so steady 30  
 That all the Israelites are fit to mob its  
 Next owner for their double-damn'd post-obits.

'Tis sweet to win, no matter how, one's laurels,  
 By blood or ink; 'tis sweet to put an end  
 To strife; 'tis sometimes sweet to have our quarrels,  
 Particularly with a tiresome friend:  
 Sweet is old wine in bottles, ale in barrels;  
 Dear is the helpless creature we defend  
 Against the world; and dear the schoolboy spot  
 We ne'er forget, though there we are forgot. 40

But sweeter still than this, than these, than all,  
 Is first and passionate love—it stands alone,  
 Like Adam's recollection of his fall;  
 The tree of knowledge has been pluck'd—all's known—  
 And life yields nothing further to recall  
 Worthy of this ambrosial sin, so shown,  
 No doubt in fable, as the unforgiven  
 Fire which Prometheus filch'd for us from heaven.

## JULIA'S LETTER

(CANTO I. cxcii—cxcviii).

"THEY tell me 'tis decided you depart:  
 'Tis wise—'tis well, but not the less a pain;  
 I have no further claim on your young heart,  
 Mine is the victim, and would be again:  
 To love too much has been the only art  
 I used;—I write in haste, and if a stain  
 Be on this sheet, 'tis not what it appears;  
 My eyeballs burn and throb, but have no tears.

" I loved, I love you, for this love have lost  
 State, station, heaven, mankind's, my own esteem,  
 And yet cannot regret what it hath cost, 11  
 So dear is still the memory of that dream ;  
 Yet, if I name my guilt, 'tis not to boast,  
 None can deem harshlier of me than I deem :  
 I trace this scrawl because I cannot rest—  
 I've nothing to reproach or to request.

/ " Man's love is of man's life a thing apart,  
 'Tis woman's whole existence ; man may range  
 The court, camp, church, the vessel, and the mart ;  
 Sword, gown, gain, glory, offer in exchange 20  
 Pride, fame, ambition, to fill up his heart,  
 And few there are whom these cannot estrange ;  
 Men have all these resources, we but one,  
 To love again, and be again undone.

" You will proceed in pleasure, and in pride,  
 Beloved and loving many ; all is o'er  
 For me on earth, except some years to hide  
 My shame and sorrow deep in my heart's core :  
 These I could bear, but cannot cast aside  
 The passion which still rages as before, — 30  
 And so farewell—forgive me, love me—No,  
 That word is idle now—but let it go.

" My breast has been all weakness, is so yet ;  
 But still I think I can collect my mind ;  
 My blood still rushes where my spirit's set,  
 As roll the waves before the settled wind ;  
 My heart is feminine, nor can forget—  
 To all, except one image, madly blind ;  
 So shakes the needle, and so stands the pole,  
 As vibrates my fond heart to my fix'd soul. 40

" I have no more to say, but linger still,  
 And dare not set my seal upon this sheet,  
 And yet I may as well the task fulfil,  
 My misery can scarce be more complete :



I had not lived till now, could sorrow kill ;  
 Death shuns the wretch who fain the blow would  
     meet,  
 And I must even survive this last adieu,  
 And bear with life to love and pray for you ! ”

This note was written upon gilt-edged paper  
     With a neat little crow-quill, slight and new ;      50  
 Her small white hand could hardly reach the taper,  
     It trembled as magnetic needles do,  
 And yet she did not let one tear escape her ;  
     The seal a sun-flower ; “ *Elle vous suit partout,* ”  
 The motto, cut upon a white cornelian ;  
 The wax was superfine, its hue vermillion.

## POETICAL COMMANDMENTS

(CANTO I. cc—ccvi)

My poem 's epic, and is meant to be  
     Divided in twelve books ; each book containing,  
 With love, and war, a heavy gale at sea,  
     A list of ships, and captains, and kings reigning,  
 New characters ; the episodes are three :  
     A panoramic view of hell 's in training,  
 After the style of Virgil and of Homer,  
 So that my name of Epic 's no misnomer.

All these things will be specified in time,  
     With strict regard to Aristotle's rules,      10  
 The *Vade Mecum* of the true sublime,  
     Which makes so many poets, and some fools :  
 Prose poets like blank-verse, I'm fond of rhyme,  
     Good workmen never quarrel with their tools ;  
 I've got new mythological machinery,  
 And very handsome supernatural scenery.

There 's only one slight difference between  
     Me and my epic brethren gone before,  
 And here the advantage is my own, I ween  
     (Not that I have not several merits more,      20



But this will more peculiarly be seen) ;

They so embellish, that 'tis quite a bore  
Their labyrinth of fables to thread through,  
Whereas this story's actually true.

If any person doubt it, I appeal

To history, tradition, and to facts,  
To newspapers, whose truth all know and feel,  
To plays in five, and operas in three acts ;  
All these confirm my statement a good deal,  
But that which more completely faith exacts  
Is, that myself, and several now in Seville,  
*Saw* Juan's last elopement with the devil.

30

If ever I should condescend to prose,

I'll write poetical commandments, which  
Shall supersede beyond all doubt all those  
That went before ; in these I shall enrich  
My text with many things that no one knows,  
And carry precept to the highest pitch :  
I'll call the work " Longinus o'er a Bottle,  
Or, Every Poet his *own* Aristotle."

40

Thou shalt believe in Milton, Dryden, Pope ;

Thou shalt not set up Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey ;  
Because the first is crazed beyond all hope,

The second drunk, the third so quaint and mouthy :  
With Crabbe it may be difficult to cope,

And Campbell's Hippocrene is somewhat drouthy :  
Thou shalt not steal from Samuel Rogers, nor  
Commit—flirtation with the muse of Moore.

Thou shalt not covet Mr. Sotheby's Muse,

His Pegasus, nor anything that's his ;  
Thou shalt not bear false witness like " the Blues "—

50

(There's one, at least, is very fond of this) ;  
Thou shalt not write, in short, but what I choose ;

This is true criticism, and you may kiss—  
Exactly as you please, or not,—the rod ;  
But if you don't, I'll lay it on, by G—d !

## THE SHIPWRECK

(CANTO II. xxiv—liii)

THE ship, call'd the most holy 'Trinidad,'  
 Was steering duly for the port Leghorn;  
 For there the Spanish family Moncada  
 Were settled long ere Juan's sire was born:  
 They were relations, and for them he had a  
 Letter of introduction, which the morn  
 Of his departure had been sent him by  
 His Spanish friends for those in Italy.

His suite consisted of three servants and  
 A tutor, the licentiate Pedrillo, 10  
 Who several languages did understand,  
 But now lay sick and speechless on his pillow,  
 And, rocking in his hammock, long'd for land,  
 His headache being increased by every billow;  
 And the waves oozing through the port-hole made  
 His berth a little damp, and him afraid.

'Twas not without some reason, for the wind  
 Increased at night, until it blew a gale;  
 And though 'twas not much to a naval mind,  
 Some landsmen would have look'd a little pale, 20  
 For sailors are, in fact, a different kind:  
 At sunset they began to take in sail,  
 For the sky show'd it would come on to blow,  
 And carry away, perhaps, a mast or so.

At one o'clock the wind with sudden shift  
 Threw the ship right into the trough of the sea,  
 Which struck her aft, and made an awkward rift,  
 Started the stern-post, also shatter'd the  
 Whole of her stern-frame, and, ere she could lift 30  
 Herself from out her present jeopardy,  
 The rudder tore away: 'twas time to sound  
 The pumps, and there were four feet water found.



One gang of people instantly was put

Upon the pumps, and the remainder set  
To get up part of the cargo, and what not ;

But they could not come at the leak as yet ;  
At last they did get at it really, but

Still their salvation was an even bet :  
The water rush'd through in a way quite puzzling,  
While they thrust sheets, shirts, jackets, bales of muslin,

Into the opening ; but all such ingredients 41  
Would have been vain, and they must have gone  
down,

Despite of all their efforts and expedients,  
But for the pumps : I'm glad to make them known  
To all the brother tars who may have need hence,  
For fifty tons of water were upthrown  
By them per hour, and they all had been undone,  
But for the maker, Mr. Mann, of London.

As day advanced the weather seem'd to abate,  
And then the leak they reckon'd to reduce, 50  
And keep the ship afloat, though three feet yet  
Kept two hand and one chain-pump still in use.  
The wind blew fresh again : as it grew late  
A squall came on, and while some guns broke loose,  
A gust—which all descriptive power transcends—  
Laid with one blast the ship on her beam ends.

There she lay, motionless, and seem'd upset ;  
The water left the hold, and wash'd the decks,  
And made a scene men do not soon forget ;  
For they remember battles, fires, and wrecks, 60  
Or any other thing that brings regret,  
Or breaks their hopes, or hearts, or heads, or necks ;  
Thus drownings are much talk'd of by the divers,  
And swimmers, who may chance to be survivors.

Immediately the masts were cut away,  
Both main and mizen : first the mizen went,  
The main-mast follow'd ; but the ship still lay  
Like a mere log, and baffled our intent.



Foremast and bowsprit were cut down, and they  
Eased her at last (although we never meant  
To part with all till every hope was blighted),  
And then with violence the old ship righted.

70

It may be easily supposed, while this  
Was going on, some people were unquiet,  
That passengers would find it much amiss  
To lose their lives, as well as spoil their diet ;  
That even the able seaman, deeming his  
Days nearly o'er, might be disposed to riot,  
As upon such occasions tars will ask  
For grog, and sometimes drink rum from the cask. 80

There 's nought, no doubt, so much the spirit calms  
As rum and true religion : thus it was,  
Some plunder'd, some drank spirits, some sung psalms,  
The high wind made the treble, and as bass  
The hoarse harsh waves kept time ; fright cured the  
qualms

Of all the luckless landmen's sea-sick maws :  
Strange sounds of wailing, blasphemy, devotion,  
Clamour'd in chorus to the roaring ocean.

Perhaps more mischief had been done, but for  
Our Juan, who, with sense beyond his years,  
Got to the spirit-room, and stood before  
It with a pair of pistols ; and their fears,  
As if Death were more dreadful by his door  
Of fire than water, spite of oaths and tears,  
Kept still aloof the crew, who, ere they sunk,  
Thought it would be becoming to die drunk.

90

'Give us more grog,' they cried, 'for it will be  
All one an hour hence.' Juan answer'd, 'No !  
'Tis true that death awaits both you and me,  
But let us die like men, not sink below  
Like brutes : '—and thus his dangerous post kept he,  
And none liked to anticipate the blow ;  
And even Pedrillo, his most reverend tutor,  
Was for some rum a disappointed suitor.

100

The good old gentleman was quite aghast,  
 And made a loud and pious lamentation ;  
 Repented all his sins, and made a last  
 Irrevocable vow of reformation ;  
 Nothing should tempt him more (this peril past)  
 To quit his academic occupation,  
 In cloisters of the classic Salamanca,  
 To follow Juan's wake, like Sancho Panca.

110

But now there came a flash of hope once more ;  
 Day broke, and the wind lull'd : the masts were gone ;  
 The leak increased ; shoals round her, but no shore,  
 The vessel swam, yet still she held her own.  
 They tried the pumps again, and though before  
 Their desperate efforts seem'd all useless grown,  
 A glimpse of sunshine set some hands to bale—  
 The stronger pump'd, the weaker thrumm'd a sail.

Under the vessel's keel the sail was pass'd,  
 And for the moment it had some effect ;  
 But with a leak, and not a stick of mast,  
 Nor rag of canvas, what could they expect ?  
 But still 'tis best to struggle to the last,  
 'Tis never too late to be wholly wreck'd :  
 And though 'tis true that man can only die once,  
 'Tis not so pleasant in the Gulf of Lyons.

121

There winds and waves had hurl'd them, and from  
 thence,

Without their will, they carried them away ;  
 For they were forced with steering to dispense,  
 And never had as yet a quiet day  
 On which they might repose, or even commence  
 A jurymast or rudder, or could say  
 The ship would swim an hour, which, by good luck,  
 Still swam—though not exactly like a duck.

130

The wind, in fact, perhaps, was rather less,  
 But the ship labour'd so, they scarce could hope  
 To weather out much longer ; the distress  
 Was also great with which they had to cope

140



For want of water, and their solid mess  
Was scant enough : in vain the telescope  
Was used—nor sail nor shore appear'd in sight,  
Nought but the heavy sea, and coming night.

Again the weather threaten'd,—again blew  
A gale, and in the fore and after hold  
Water appear'd ; yet, though the people knew  
All this, the most were patient, and some bold,  
Until the chains and leathers were worn through  
Of all our pumps :—a wreck complete she roll'd,  
At mercy of the waves, whose mercies are 151  
Like human beings during civil war.

Then came the carpenter, at last, with tears  
In his rough eyes, and told the captain, he  
Could do no more : he was a man in years,  
And long had voyaged through many a stormy sea,  
And if he wept at length, they were not fears  
That made his eyelids as a woman's be,  
But he, poor fellow, had a wife and children,  
Two things for dying people quite bewildering. 160

The ship was evidently settling now  
Fast by the head ; and, all distinction gone,  
Some went to prayers again, and made a vow  
Of candles to their saints—but there were none  
To pay them with ; and some look'd o'er the bow ;  
Some hoisted out the boats ; and there was one  
That begg'd Pedrillo for an absolution,  
Who told him to be damn'd—in his confusion.

Some lash'd them in their hammocks ; some put on  
Their best clothes, as if going to a fair ; 170  
Some cursed the day on which they saw the sun,  
And gnash'd their teeth, and, howling, tore their hair ;  
And others went on as they had begun,  
Getting the boats out, being well aware  
That a tight boat will live in a rough sea,  
Unless with breakers close beneath her lee.



The worst of all was, that in their condition,  
Having been several days in great distress,  
'Twas difficult to get out such provision  
As now might render their long suffering less : 180  
Men, even when dying, dislike inanition ;  
Their stock was damaged by the weather's stress :  
Two casks of biscuit, and a keg of butter,  
Were all that could be thrown into the cutter.

But in the long-boat they contrived to stow  
Some pounds of bread, though injured by the wet ;  
Water, a twenty-gallon cask or so ;  
Six flasks of wine : and they contrived to get  
A portion of their beef up from below,  
And with a piece of pork, moreover, met, 190  
But scarce enough to serve them for a luncheon—  
Then there was rum, eight gallons in a puncheon.

The other boats, the yawl and pinnace, had  
Been stove in the beginning of the gale ;  
And the long-boat's condition was but bad,  
As there were but two blankets for a sail,  
And one oar for a mast, which a young lad  
Threw in by good luck over the ship's rail ;  
And two boats could not hold, far less be stored,  
To save one half the people then on board. 200

'Twas twilight, and the sunless day went down  
Over the waste of waters ; like a veil,  
Which, if withdrawn, would but disclose the frown  
Of one whose hate is mask'd but to assail.  
Thus to their hopeless eyes the night was shown,  
And grimly darkled o'er the faces pale,  
And the dim desolate deep : twelve days had Fear  
Been their familiar, and now Death was here.

Some trial had been making at a raft,  
With little hope in such a rolling sea, 210  
A sort of thing at which one would have laugh'd,  
If any laughter at such times could be,

Unless with people who too much have quaff'd,  
And have a kind of wild and horrid glee,  
Half epileptical, and half hysterical:—  
Their preservation would have been a miracle.

At half-past eight o'clock, booms, hencoops, spars,  
And all things, for a chance, had been cast loose,  
That still could keep afloat the struggling tars,  
For yet they strove, although of no great use: 220  
There was no light in heaven but a few stars,  
The boats put off o'ercrowded with their crews;  
She gave a heel, and then a lurch to port,  
And, going down head foremost—sunk, in short.

Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell—  
Then shriek'd the timid, and stood still the brave—  
Then some leap'd overboard with dreadful yell,  
As eager to anticipate their grave;  
And the sea yawn'd around her like a hell,  
And down she suck'd with her the whirling wave,  
Like one who grapples with his enemy, 231  
And strives to strangle him before he die.

And first one universal shriek there rush'd,  
Louder than the loud ocean, like a crash  
Of echoing thunder; and then all was hush'd,  
Save the wild wind and the remorseless dash  
Of billows; but at intervals there gush'd,  
Accompanied with a convulsive splash,  
A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry  
Of some strong swimmer in his agony. 240



## HAIDÉE

(CANTO II, cxi—cxviii)

How long in his damp trance young Juan lay  
 He knew not, for the earth was gone for him,  
 And Time had nothing more of night nor day  
 For his congealing blood, and senses dim ;  
 And how this heavy faintness pass'd away  
 He knew not, till each painful pulse and limb,  
 And tingling vein, seem'd throbbing back to life,  
 For Death, though vanquish'd, still retir'd with strife.

His eyes he open'd, shut, again unclosed,  
 For all was doubt and dizziness ; he thought 10  
 He still was in the boat, and had but dozed,  
 And felt again with his despair o'erwrought,  
 And wish'd it death in which he had reposed,  
 And then once more his feelings back were brought,  
 And slowly by his swimming eyes was seen  
 A lovely female face of seventeen.

'Twas bending close o'er his, and the small mouth  
 Seem'd almost prying into his for breath ;  
 And chafing him, the soft warm hand of youth  
 Recall'd his answering spirits back from death ; 20  
 And, bathing his chill temples, tried to soothe  
 Each pulse to animation, till beneath  
 Its gentle touch and trembling care, a sigh  
 To these kind efforts made a low reply.

Then was the cordial pour'd, and mantle flung  
 Around his scarce-clad limbs ; and the fair arm  
 Raised higher the faint head which o'er it hung :  
 And her transparent cheek, all pure and warm,  
 Pillow'd his death-like forehead ; then she wrung  
 His dewy curls, long drench'd by every storm ;  
 And watch'd with eagerness each throb that drew  
 A sigh from his heaved bosom—and hers, too. 32



And lifting him with care into the cave,  
The gentle girl, and her attendant,—one  
Young, yet her elder, and of brow less grave,  
And more robust of figure—then begun  
To kindle fire, and as the new flames gave  
Light to the rocks that roof'd them, which the sun  
Had never seen, the maid, or whatsoe'er  
She was, appear'd distinct, and tall, and fair. 40

Her brow was overhung with coins of gold,  
That sparkled o'er the auburn of her hair,  
Her clustering hair, whose longer locks were roll'd  
In braids behind ; and though her stature were  
Even of the highest for a female mould,  
They nearly reach'd her heel ; and in her air  
There was a something which bespoke command,  
As one who was a lady in the land.

Her hair, I said, was auburn ; but her eyes  
Were black as death, their lashes the same hue, 50  
Of downcast length, in whose silk shadow lies  
Deepest attraction ; for when to the view  
Forth from its raven fringe the full glance flies,  
Ne'er with such force the swiftest arrow flew ;  
'Tis as the snake late coil'd, who pours his length,  
And hurls at once his venom and his strength.

Her brow was white and low, her cheek's pure dye  
Like twilight rosy still with the set sun ;  
Short upper lip—sweet lips ! that make us sigh  
Ever to have seen such ; for she was one 60  
Fit for the model of a statuary  
(A race of mere impostors, when all's done—  
I've seen much finer women, ripe and real,  
Than all the nonsense of their stone ideal).

## JUAN AND HAIDÉE

(CANTO II, clxxxiii—clxxxix)

It was the cooling hour, just when the rounded  
Red sun sinks down behind the azure hill,  
Which then seems as if the whole earth it bounded,  
Circling all nature, hush'd, and dim, and still,  
With the far mountain-crescent half surrounded  
On one side, and the deep sea calm and chill,  
Upon the other, and the rosy sky,  
With one star sparkling through it like an eye.

And thus they wander'd forth, and hand in hand,  
Over the shining pebbles and the shells, 10  
Glided along the smooth and harden'd sand,  
And in the worn and wild receptacles  
Work'd by the storms, yet work'd as it were plann'd,  
In hollow halls, with sparry roofs and cells,  
They turn'd to rest; and, each clasp'd by an arm,  
Yielded to the deep twilight's purple charm.

They look'd up to the sky, whose floating glow  
Spread like a rosy ocean, vast and bright;  
They gazed upon the glittering sea below,  
Whence the broad moon rose circling into sight; 20  
They heard the waves splash, and the wind so low,  
And saw each other's dark eyes darting light  
Into each other—and, beholding this,  
Their lips drew near, and clung into a kiss;

A long, long kiss, a kiss of youth, and love,  
And beauty, all concentrating like rays  
Into one focus, kindled from above;  
Such kisses as belong to early days,  
Where heart, and soul, and sense, in concert move, 30  
And the blood's lava, and the pulse a blaze,  
Each kiss a heart-quake,—for a kiss's strength,  
I think, it must be reckon'd by its length.



By length I mean duration ; theirs endured  
Heaven knows how long—no doubt they never  
reckon'd ;

And if they had, they could not have secured  
The sum of their sensations to a second :  
They had not spoken ; but they felt allured,  
As if their souls and lips each other beckon'd,  
Which, being join'd, like swarming bees they clung—  
Their hearts the flowers from whence the honey sprung.

They were alone, but not alone as they 41  
Who shut in chambers think it loneliness ;  
The silent ocean, and the starlight bay,  
The twilight glow, which momentarily grew less,  
The voiceless sands, and dropping caves, that lay  
Around them, made them to each other press,  
As if there were no life beneath the sky  
Save theirs, and that their life could never die.

They fear'd no eyes nor ears on that lone beach,  
They felt no terrors from the night ; they were 50  
All in all to each other ; though their speech  
Was broken words, they *thought* a language there,—  
And all the burning tongues the passions teach  
Found in one sigh the best interpreter  
Of nature's oracle—first love,—that all  
Which Eve has left her daughters since her fall.

ALAS ! THE LOVE OF WOMEN !

(CANTO II, cxcix—cciv)

ALAS ! the love of women ! it is known  
To be a lovely and a fearful thing ;  
For all of theirs upon that die is thrown,  
And if 'tis lost, life hath no more to bring  
To them but mockeries of the past alone,  
And their revenge is as the tiger's spring,  
Deadly, and quick, and crushing ; yet, as real  
Torture is theirs,—what they inflict they feel.



They are right ; for man, to man so oft unjust,  
 Is always so to women ; one sole bond  
 Awaits them, treachery is all their trust ;  
 Taught to conceal, their bursting hearts despond  
 Over their idol, till some wealthier lust  
 Buys them in marriage—and what rests beyond ?  
 A thankless husband, next a faithless lover,  
 Then dressing, nursing, praying, and all's over.

Some take a lover, some take drams or prayers,  
 Some mind their household, others dissipation,  
 Some run away, and but exchange their cares,  
 Losing the advantage of a virtuous station ;  
 Few changes e'er can better their affairs,  
 Theirs being an unnatural situation,  
 From the dull palace to the dirty hovel :  
 Some play the devil, and then write a novel.

Haidée was Nature's bride, and knew not this :  
 Haidée was Passion's child, born where the sun  
 Showers triple light, and scorches even the kiss  
 Of his gazelle-eyed daughters ; she was one  
 Made but to love, to feel that she was his  
 Who was her chosen : what was said or done  
 Elsewhere was nothing. She had nought to fear,  
 Hope, care, nor love beyond,—her heart beat *here*.

And oh ! that quickening of the heart, that beat !  
 How much it costs us ! yet each rising throb  
 Is in its cause as its effect so sweet,  
 That Wisdom, ever on the watch to rob  
 Joy of its alchemy, and to repeat  
 Fine truths ; even Conscience, too, has a tough job  
 To make us understand each good old maxim,  
 So good—I wonder Castlereagh don't tax 'em.

And now 'twas done—on the lone shore were plighted  
 Their hearts ; the stars, their nuptial torches, shed  
 Beauty upon the beautiful they lighted :  
 Ocean their witness, and the cave their bed,

By their own feelings hallow'd and united,  
 Their priest was Solitude, and they were wed :  
 And they were happy, for to their young eyes  
 Each was an angel, and earth paradise.

Nature

## MARRIAGE AND THE MUSE

(CANTO III, viii—xi)

THERE'S doubtless something in domestic doings  
 Which forms, in fact, true love's antithesis ;  
 Romances paint at full length people's wooings,  
 But only give a bust of marriages ;  
 For no one cares for matrimonial cooings,  
 There's nothing wrong in a connubial kiss :  
 Think you, if Laura had been Petrarch's wife,  
 He would have written sonnets all his life ?

All tragedies are finish'd by a death,  
 All comedies are ended by a marriage ;  
 The future states of both are left to faith,  
 For authors fear description might disparage  
 The worlds to come of both, or fall beneath,  
 And then both worlds would punish their miscarriage ;  
 So leaving each their priest and prayer-book ready,  
 They say no more of Death or of the Lady.

10

The only two that in my recollection  
 Have sung of heaven and hell, or marriage, are  
 Dante and Milton, and of both the affection  
 Was hapless in their nuptials, for some bar  
 Of fault or temper ruin'd the connexion  
 (Such things, in fact, it don't ask much to mar) ;  
 But Dante's Beatrice and Milton's Eve  
 Were not drawn from their spouses, you conceive.

20

Some persons say that Dante meant theology  
 By Beatrice, and not a mistress—I,  
 Although my opinion may require apology,  
 Deem this a commentator's phantasy,



Unless indeed it was from his own knowledge he  
 Decided thus, and show'd good reason why ; 30  
 I think that Dante's more abstruse ecstasies  
 Meant to personify the mathematics.

## LAMBRO'S RETURN

(CANTO III, xxvii—xli)

HE saw his white walls shining in the sun,  
 His garden trees all shadowy and green ;  
 He heard his rivulet's light bubbling run,  
 The distant dog-bark ; and perceived between  
 The umbrage of the wood so cool and dun,  
 The moving figures, and the sparkling sheen  
 Of arms (in the East all arm)—and various dyes  
 Of colour'd garbs, as bright as butterflies.

And as the spot where they appear he nears,  
 Surprised at these unwonted signs of idling, 10  
 He hears—alas ! no music of the spheres,  
 But an unhallow'd, earthly sound of fiddling !  
 A melody which made him doubt his ears,  
 The cause being past his guessing or unriddling ;  
 A pipe, too, and a drum, and shortly after,  
 A most unoriental roar of laughter.

And still more nearly to the place advancing,  
 Descending rather quickly the declivity,  
 Through the waved branches, o'er the greensward  
 glancing,  
 'Midst other indications of festivity, 20  
 Seeing a troop of his domestics dancing  
 Like dervises, who turn as on a pivot, he  
 Perceived it was the Pyrrhic dance so martial,  
 To which the Levantines are very partial.

And further on a group of Grecian girls,  
 The first and tallest her white kerchief waving,  
 Were strung together like a row of pearls,  
 Link'd hand in hand, and dancing : each too having



Down her white neck long floating auburn curls—  
(The least of which would set ten poets raving); 30  
Their leader sang—and bounded to her song,  
With choral step and voice, the virgin throng.

And here, assembled cross-legg'd round their trays,  
Small social parties just begun to dine;  
Pilaus and meats of all sorts met the gaze,  
And flasks of Samian and of Chian wine,  
And sherbet cooling in the porous vase;  
Above them their dessert grew on its vine;—  
The orange and pomegranate nodding o'er,  
Dropp'd in their laps, scarce pluck'd, their mellow store.

A band of children, round a snow-white ram, 40  
There wreath his venerable horns with flowers;  
While peaceful as if still an unwean'd lamb,  
The patriarch of the flock all gently cowers  
His sober head, majestically tame,  
Or eats from out the palm, or playful lowers  
His brow, as if in act to butt, and then  
Yielding to their small hands, draws back again.

Their classical profiles, and glittering dresses,  
Their large black eyes, and soft seraphic cheeks, 50  
Crimson as cleft pomegranates, their long tresses.  
The gesture which enchants, the eye that speaks,  
The innocence which happy childhood blesses,  
Made quite a picture of these little Greeks;  
So that the philosophical beholder  
Sigh'd for their sakes—that they should e'er grow older.

Afar, a dwarf buffoon stood telling tales  
To a sedate grey circle of old smokers,  
Of secret treasures found in hidden vales, 60  
Of wonderful replies from Arab jokers,  
Of charms to make good gold and cure bad ails,  
Of rocks bewitch'd that open to the knockers,  
Of magic ladies who, by one sole act,  
Transform'd their lords to beasts (but that's a fact).

Here was no lack of innocent diversion  
 For the imagination or the senses,  
 Song, dance, wine, music, stories from the Persian,  
 All pretty pastimes in which no offence is ;  
 But Lambro saw all these things with aversion,  
 Perceiving in his absence such expenses, 70  
 Dreading that climax of all human ills,  
 The inflammation of his weekly bills.

Ah ! what is man ? what perils still environ  
 The happiest mortals even after dinner !  
 A day of gold from out an age of iron  
 Is all that life allows the luckiest sinner ;  
 Pleasure (whene'er she sings, at least) 's a siren,  
 That lures, to flay alive, the young beginner ;  
 Lambro's reception at his people's banquet  
 Was such as fire accords to a wet blanket. 80

He—being a man who seldom used a word  
 Too much, and wishing gladly to surprise  
 (In general he surprised men with the sword)  
 His daughter—had not sent before to advise  
 Of his arrival, so that no one stirr'd ;  
 And long he paused to reassure his eyes,  
 In fact much more astonish'd than delighted,  
 To find so much good company invited.

He did not know (alas ! how men will lie !)  
 That a report (especially the Greeks) 90  
 Avouch'd his death (such people never die),  
 And put his house in mourning several weeks,—  
 But now their eyes and also lips were dry ;  
 The bloom, too, had return'd to Haidée's cheeks.  
 Her tears, too, being return'd into their fount,  
 She now kept house upon her own account.

Hence all this rice, meat, dancing, wine, and fiddling,  
 Which turn'd the isle into a place of pleasure ;  
 The servants all were getting drunk or idling,  
 A life which made them happy beyond measure. 100



And when his bones are dust, his grave a blank,  
 His station, generation, even his nation,  
 Become a thing, or nothing, save to rank  
 In chronological commemoration,  
 Some dull MS. oblivion long has sank,  
 Or graven stone found in a barrack's station  
 In digging the foundation of a closet,  
 May turn his name up, as a rare deposit.

10

And glory long has made the sages smile ;  
 'Tis something, nothing, words, illusion, wind—  
 Depending more upon the historian's style  
 Than on the name a person leaves behind :  
 Troy owes to Homer what whist owes to Hoyle :  
 The present century was growing blind  
 To the great Marlborough's skill in giving knocks,  
 Until his late Life by Archdeacon Coxe.

20

Milton's the prince of poets—so we say ;  
 A little heavy, but no less divine :  
 An independent being in his day—  
 Learn'd, pious, temperate in love and wine ;  
 But his life falling into Johnson's way,  
 We're told this great high priest of all the Nine  
 Was whipt at college—a harsh sire—odd spouse,  
 For the first Mrs. Milton left his house.

30

All these are, *certes*, entertaining facts,  
 Like Shakespeare's stealing deer, Lord Bacon's bribes ;  
 Like Titus' youth, and Cæsar's earliest acts ;  
 Like Burns (whom Doctor Currie well describes) ;  
 Like Cromwell's pranks ;—but although truth exacts  
 These amiable descriptions from the scribes,  
 As most essential to their hero's story,  
 They do not much contribute to his glory.

40



All are not moralists, like Southey, when  
 He prated to the world of 'Pantisocracy ;'  
 Or Wordsworth unexcised, unhired, who then  
 Season'd his pedlar poems with democracy ;  
 Or Coleridge, long before his flighty pen  
 Let to the Morning Post its aristocracy ;  
 When he and Southey, following the same path,  
 Espoused two partners (milliners of Bath).

Such names at present cut a convict figure,  
 The very Botany Bay in moral geography ; 50  
 Their loyal treason, renegado rigour,  
 Are good manure for their more bare biography,  
 Wordsworth's last quarto, by the way, is bigger  
 Than any since the birthday of typography ;  
 A drowsy frowzy poem, call'd the 'Excursion',  
 Writ in a manner which is my aversion.

## WORDSWORTH

(CANTO III. xcvi—c)

WE learn from Horace, 'Homer sometimes sleeps ;'  
 We feel without him, Wordsworth sometimes  
 wakes,—  
 To show with what complacency he creeps,  
 With his dear '*Waggoners*,' around his lakes.  
 He wishes for "a boat" to sail the deeps—  
 Of ocean ?—No, of air ; and then he makes  
 Another outcry for 'a little boat,'  
 And drivels seas to set it well afloat.

If he must fain sweep o'er the ethereal plain,  
 And Pegasus runs restive in his '*Waggon*,' 10  
 Could he not beg the loan of Charles's Wain ?  
 Or pray Medea for a single dragon ?  
 Or if, too classic for his vulgar brain,  
 He fear'd his neck to venture such a nag on,  
 And he must needs mount nearer to the moon,  
 Could not the blockhead ask for a balloon ?

“Pedlars,” and “Boats,” and “Waggon!” Oh! ye  
shades

Of Pope and Dryden, are we come to this?  
That trash of such sort not alone evades

Contempt, but from the bathos’ vast abyss 20  
Flcats scumlike uppermost, and these Jack Cades

Of sense and song above your graves may hiss—  
The ‘little boatman’ and his ‘Peter Bell’  
Can sneer at him who drew ‘Achitophel’!

AVE MARIA

(CANTO III, ci—cix)

T’ OUR tale.—The feast was over, the slaves gone,

The dwarfs and dancing girls had all retired;

The Arab lore and poet’s song were done,

And every sound of revelry expired;

The lady and her lover, left alone,

The rosy flood of twilight’s sky admired;—

Ave Maria! o’er the earth and sea,

That heavenliest hour of Heaven is worthiest thee!

Ave Maria! blessed be the hour!

The time, the clime, the spot, where I so oft 10

Have felt that moment in its fullest power

Sink o’er the earth so beautiful and soft,

While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,

Or the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft,

And not a breath crept through the rosy air,

And yet the forest leaves seem’d stirr’d with prayer.

Ave Maria! ’tis the hour of prayer!

Ave Maria! ’tis the hour of love!

Ave Maria! may our spirits dare

Look up to thine and to thy Son’s above! 20

Ave Maria! oh that face so fair!

Those downcast eyes beneath the Almighty dove—

What though ’tis but a pictured image strike,—

That painting is no idol,—’tis too like.



Some kinder casuists are pleased to say,  
 In nameless print—that I have no devotion ;  
 But set those persons down with me to pray,  
 And you shall see who has the properest notion  
 Of getting into heaven the shortest way ;  
 My altars are the mountains and the ocean, 30  
 Earth, air, stars,—all that springs from the great Whole,  
 Who hath produced, and will receive the soul.

Sweet hour of twilight !—in the solitude  
 Of the pine forest, and the silent shore  
 Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,  
 Rooted where once the Adrian wave flow'd o'er,  
 To where the last Cæsarean fortress stood,  
 Evergreen forest ! which Boccaccio's lore  
 And Dryden's lay made haunted ground to me,  
 How have I loved the twilight hour and thee ! 40

The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,  
 Making their summer lives one ceaseless song,  
 Were the sole echoes, save my steed's and mine.  
 And vesper bell's that rose the boughs along ;  
 The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line,  
 His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the fair throng  
 Which learn'd from this example not to fly  
 From a true lover,—shadow'd my mind's eye.

Oh, Hesperus ! thou bringest all good things—  
 Home to the weary, to the hungry cheer, 50  
 To the young bird the parent's brooding wings,  
 The welcome stall to the o'erlabour'd steer ;  
 Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone clings,  
 Whate'er our household gods protect of dear,  
 Are gather'd round us by thy look of rest ;  
 Thou bring'st the child, too, to the mother's breast.

Soft hour ! which wakes the wish and melts the heart  
 Of those who sail the seas, on the first day  
 When they from their sweet friends are torn apart ;  
 Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way 60



As the far bell of vesper makes him start,  
 Seeming to weep the dying day's decay ;  
 Is this a fancy which our reason scorns ?  
 Ah ! surely nothing dies but something mourns !

When Nero perish'd by the justest doom  
 Which ever the destroyer yet destroy'd,  
 Amidst the roar of liberated Rome,  
 Of nations freed, and the world overjoy'd,  
 Some hands unseen strew'd flowers upon his tomb :  
 Perhaps the weakness of a heart not void 70  
 Of feeling for some kindness done, when power  
 Had left the wretch an uncorrupted hour.

## TROY

(CANTO IV, lxxvi—lxxviii)

THERE, on the green and village-cotted hill, is  
 (Flank'd by the Hellespont, and by the sea)  
 Entomb'd the bravest of the brave, Achilles ;  
 They say so—(Bryant says the contrary) :  
 And further downward, tall and towering still, is  
 The tumulus—of whom ? Heaven knows ; 't may be  
 Patroclus, Ajax, or Protesilaus ;  
 All heroes, who if living still would slay us.

High barrows, without marble, or a name,  
 A vast, untill'd, and mountain-skirted plain, 10  
 And Ida in the distance, still the same,  
 And old Scamander (if 'tis he), remain ;  
 The situation seems still form'd for fame—  
 A hundred thousand men might fight again,  
 With ease ; but where I sought for Ilion's walls,  
 The quiet sheep feeds, and the tortoise crawls ;

Troops of untended horses ; here and there  
 Some little hamlets, with new names uncouth ;  
 Some shepherds (unlike Paris), led to stare  
 A moment at the European youth 20

Whom to the spot their school-boy feelings bear ;  
 A Turk. with beads in hand, and pipe in mouth,  
 Extremely taken with his own religion,  
 Are what I found there—but the devil a Phrygian.

## LIFE

(CANTO VII, i—vi and CANTO XV, xcix)

O LOVE ! O Glory ! what are you who fly  
 Around us ever, rarely to alight ?  
 There 's not a meteor in the Polar sky  
 Of such transcendent and more fleeting flight.  
 Chill, and chain'd to cold earth, we lift on high  
 Our eyes in search of either lovely light ;  
 A thousand and a thousand colours they  
 Assume, then leave us on our freezing way.

And such as they are, such my present tale is,  
 A nondescript and ever-varying rhyme,  
 A versified Aurora Borealis,  
 Which flashes o'er a waste and icy clime.  
 When we know what all are, we must bewail us,  
 But ne'ertheless I hope it is no crime  
 To laugh at *all* things—for I wish to know  
 What, after *all*, are *all* things—but a *show* ?

They accuse me—*Me*—the present writer of  
 The present poem—of—I know not what—  
 A tendency to under-rate and scoff

At human power and virtue, and all that ;  
 And this they say in language rather rough.

Good God ! I wonder what they would be at !  
 I say no more than hath been said in Dante's  
 Verse, and by Solomon and by Cervantes ;

By Swift, by Machiavel, by Rochefoucault,  
 By Fénelon, by Luther, and by Plato ;  
 By Tillotson, and Wesley, and Rousseau,  
 Who knew this life was not worth a potato.



'Tis not their fault, nor mine, if this be so,—  
 For my part, I pretend not to be Cato,  
 Nor even Diogenes.—We live and die,  
 But which is best, you know no more than I.

30

Socrates said, our only knowledge was  
 'To know that nothing could be known ;' a pleasant  
 Science enough, which levels to an ass  
 Each man of wisdom, future, past, or present.  
 Newton (that proverb of the mind), alas !  
 Declared, with all his grand discoveries recent,  
 That he himself felt only 'like a youth  
 Picking up shells by the great ocean—Truth.'

40

Ecclesiastes said, 'that all is vanity'—  
 Most modern preachers say the same, or show it  
 By their examples of true Christianity :  
 In short, all know, or very soon may know it ;  
 And in this scene of all-confess'd inanity,  
 By saint, by sage, by preacher, and by poet,  
 Must I restrain me, through the fear of strife,  
 From holding up the nothingness of life ?

. . . . .

Between two worlds life hovers like a star,  
 'Twixt night and morn, upon the horizon's verge.  
 How little do we know that which we are !  
 How less what we may be ! The eternal surge  
 Of time and tide rolls on, and bears afar  
 Our bubbles ; as the old burst, new emerge,  
 Lash'd from the foam of ages ; while the graves  
 Of empires heave but like some passing waves.

51



## WELLINGTON

(CANTO IX, i—x).

OH, Wellington ! (or ' Villainton '—for Fame  
 Sounds the heroic syllables both ways ;  
 France could not even conquer your great name,  
 But punn'd it down to this facetious phrase—  
 Beating or beaten she will laugh the same,)  
 You have obtain'd great pensions and much praise :  
 Glory like yours should any dare gainsay,  
 Humanity would rise, and thunder ' Nay ! '

I don't think that you used Kinnaird quite well  
 In Marinèt's affair—in fact, 'twas shabby, 10  
 And like some other things won't do to tell  
 Upon your tomb in Westminster's old Abbey.  
 Upon the rest 'tis not worth while to dwell,  
 Such tales being for the tea-hours of some tabby ;  
 But though your years as *man* tend fast to zero,  
 In fact your Grace is still but a *young hero*.

Though Britain owes (and pays you too) so much,  
 Yet Europe doubtless owes you greatly more :  
 You have repair'd Legitimacy's crutch,  
 A prop not quite so certain as before : 20  
 The Spanish, and the French, as well as Dutch,  
 Have seen, and felt, how strongly you *restore* ;  
 And Waterloo has made the world your debtor  
 (I wish your bards would sing it rather better).

You are ' the best of cut-throats : '—do not start ;  
 The phrase is Shakespeare's, and not misapplied :—  
 War's a brain-spattering, windpipe-slitting art,  
 Unless her cause by right be sanctified.  
 If you have acted *once* a generous part,  
 The world, not the world's masters, will decide, 30  
 And I shall be delighted to learn who,  
 Save you and yours, have gain'd by Waterloo ?

I am no flatterer—you've supp'd full of flattery :  
 They say you like it too—'tis no great wonder.  
 He whose whole life has been assault and battery,  
 At last may get a little tired of thunder ;  
 And swallowing eulogy much more than satire, he  
 May like being praised for every lucky blunder,  
 Call'd ' Saviour of the Nations '—not yet saved,  
 And ' Europe's Liberator '—still enslaved. 40

I've done. Now go and dine from off the plate  
 Presented by the Prince of the Brazils,  
 And send the sentinel before your gate  
 A slice or two from your luxurious meals :  
 He fought, but has not fed so well of late.  
 Some hunger, too, they say the people feels :—  
 There is no doubt that you deserve your ration,  
 But pray give back a little to the nation.

I don't mean to reflect—a man so great as  
 You, my lord Duke ! is far above reflection : 50  
 The high Roman fashion, too, of Cincinnatus,  
 With modern history has but small connexion :  
 Though as an Irishman you love potatoes,  
 You need not take them under your direction ;  
 And half a million for your Sabine farm  
 Is rather dear !—I'm sure I mean no harm.

Great men have always scorn'd great recompenses :  
 Epaminondas saved his Thebes, and died,  
 Not leaving even his funeral expenses :  
 George Washington had thanks, and nought beside,  
 Except the all-cloudless glory (which few men's is) 61  
 To free his country : Pitt too had his pride,  
 And as a high-soul'd minister of state is  
 Renown'd for ruining Great Britain gratis.

Never had mortal man such opportunity,  
 Except Napoleon, or abused it more :  
 You might have freed fallen Europe from the unity  
 Of tyrants and been blest from shore to shore :



And *now*—what is your fame? Shall the Muse tune  
it ye?

*Now*—that the rabble's first vain shouts are o'er?  
Go! hear it in your famish'd country's cries! 71  
Behold the world! and curse your victories!

As these new cantos touch on warlike feats,  
To *you* the unflattering Muse deigns to inscribe  
Truths, that you will not read in the Gazettes,  
But which 'tis time to teach the hireling tribe  
Who fatten on their country's gore, and debts,  
Must be recited—and without a bribe.

You *did great* things: but not being *great* in mind,  
Have left *undone* the *greatest*—and mankind. 80

## LONDON

(CANTO X, lxxxi—lxxxvii).

THE sun went down, the smoke rose up, as from  
A half-unquench'd volcano, o'er a space  
Which well beseem'd the 'Devil's drawing-room,'  
As some have qualified that wondrous place:  
But Juan felt, though not approaching *home*,  
As one who, though he were not of the race,  
Revered the soil, of those true sons the mother,  
Who butcher'd half the earth, and bullied t'other.

A mighty mass of brick, and smoke, and shipping,  
Dirty and dusky, but as wide as eye 10  
Could reach, with here and there a sail just skipping  
In sight, then lost amidst the forestry  
Of masts; a wilderness of steeples peeping  
On tiptoe through their sea-coal canopy;  
A huge, dun cupola, like a foolscap crown  
On a fool's head—and there is London Town!

But Juan saw not this: each wreath of smoke  
Appear'd to him but as the magic vapour  
Of some alchymic furnace, from whence broke  
The wealth of worlds (a wealth of tax and paper):



The gloomy clouds, which o'er it as a yoke  
 Are bow'd, and put the sun out like a taper,  
 Were nothing but the natural atmosphere,  
 Extremely wholesome, though but rarely clear.

21

He paused—and so will I ; as doth a crew  
 Before they give their broadside. By and by,  
 My gentle countrymen, we will renew  
 Our old acquaintance ; and at least I'll try  
 To tell you truths *you* will not take as true,  
 Because they are so ;—a male Mrs. Fry,  
 With a soft besom will I sweep your halls,  
 And brush a web or two from off the walls.

30

Oh Mrs. Fry ! Why go to Newgate ? Why  
 Preach to poor rogues ? And wherefore not begin  
 With Carlton, or with other houses ? Try  
 Your hand at harden'd and imperial sin.  
 To mend the people's an absurdity,  
 A jargon, a mere philanthropic din,  
 Unless you make their betters better :—Fie !  
 I thought you had more religion, Mrs. Fry.

40

Teach them the decencies of good threescore ;  
 Cure them of tours, hussar and highland dresses ;  
 Tell them that youth once gone returns no more,  
 That hired huzzas redeem no land's distresses ;  
 Tell them Sir William Curtis is a bore,  
 Too dull even for the dullest of excesses,  
 The witless Falstaff of a hoary Hal,  
 A fool whose bells have ceased to ring at all.

Tell them, though it may be perhaps too late  
 On life's worn confine, jaded, bloated, sated,  
 To set up vain pretence of being great,  
 'Tis not so to be good ; and be it stated,  
 The worthiest kings have ever loved least state ;  
 And tell them——But you won't, and I have prated  
 Just now enough ; but by and by I'll prattle  
 Like Roland's horn in Roncesvalles' battle.

50

## BYRON AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

(CANTO XI, lii—lxiii).

JUAN knew several languages—as well

He might—and brought them up with skill, in time  
To save his fame with each accomplish'd belle,

Who still regretted that he did not rhyme.  
There wanted but this requisite to swell

His qualities (with them) into sublime :  
Lady Fitz-Frisky, and Miss Mævia Mannish,  
Both long'd extremely to be sung in Spanish.

However, he did pretty well, and was

Admitted as an aspirant to all 10  
The coteries, and, as in Banquo's glass,  
At great assemblies or in parties small,  
He saw ten thousand living authors pass,  
That being about their average numeral ;  
Also the eighty 'greatest living poets,'  
As every paltry magazine can show *it*'s.

In twice five years the 'greatest living poet,'

Like to the champion in the fisty ring,  
Is call'd on to support his claim, or show it,  
Although 'tis an imaginary thing. 20

Even I—albeit I'm sure I did not know it,  
Nor sought of foolscap subjects to be king,—  
Was reckon'd, a considerable time,  
The grand Napoleon of the realms of rhyme.

But Juan was my Moscow, and Faliero

My Leipsic, and my Mont Saint Jean seems Cain :  
*La Belle Alliance* of dunces down at zero,

Now that the Lion's fall'n, may rise again :  
But I will fall at least as fell my hero ;

Nor reign at all, or as a *monarch* reign ; 30  
Or to some lonely isle of gaolers go,  
With turncoat Southey for my turnkey Lowe.



Sir Walter reign'd before me ; Moore and Campbell  
 Before and after : but now grown more holy,  
 The Muses upon Sion's hill must ramble  
 With poets almost clergymen, or wholly :  
 And Pegasus has a psalmodic amble  
 Beneath the very Reverend Rowley Powley,  
 Who shoes the glorious animal with stilts,  
 A modern Ancient Pistol—by the hilts !

40

Still he excels that artificial hard  
 Labourer in the same vineyard, though the vine  
 Yields him but vinegar for his reward.—  
 That neutralised dull Dorus of the Nine ;  
 That swarthy Sporus, neither man nor bard ;  
 That ox of verse, who *ploughs* for every line :—  
 Cambyzes' roaring Romans beat at least  
 The howling Hebrews of Cybele's priest.—

Then there's my gentle Euphues,—who, they say,  
 Sets up for being a sort of *moral me* ;  
 He'll find it rather difficult some day  
 To turn out both, or either, it may be.  
 Some persons think that Coleridge hath the sway ;  
 And Wordsworth has supporters, two or three ;  
 And that deep-mouth'd Bœotian 'Savage Landor'  
 Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's gander.

50

John Keats—who was kill'd off by one critique,  
 Just as he really promised something great,  
 If not intelligible, without Greek  
 Contrived to talk about the gods of late,  
 Much as they might have been supposed to speak.  
 Poor fellow ! His was an untoward fate ;  
 'Tis strange the mind, that fiery particle,  
 Should let itself be snuff'd out by an article.

60

The list grows long of live and dead pretenders  
 To that which none will gain—or none will know  
 The conqueror at least ; who, ere Time renders  
 His last award, will have the long grass grow



Above his burnt-out brain, and sapless cinders.

If I might augur, I should rate but low 70  
 Their chances ;—they're too numerous, like the thirty  
 Mock tyrants, when Rome's annals wax'd but dirty.

This is the literary *lower* empire,

Where the prætorian bands take up the matter ;—  
 A 'dreadful trade,' like his who 'gathers samphire,'

The insolent soldiery to soothe and flatter,  
 With the same feelings as you'd coax a vampire.

Now, were I once at home, and in good satire,  
 I'd try conclusions with those Janizaries,  
 And show them *what* an intellectual war is. 80

I think I know a trick or two, would turn

Their flanks ;—but it is hardly worth my while  
 With such small gear to give myself concern :

Indeed I've not the necessary bile ;  
 My natural temper's really aught but stern,  
 And even my Muse's worst reproof's a smile ;  
 And then she drops a brief and modern curtsy,  
 And glides away, assured she never hurts ye.

## CARPE DIEM

(CANTO XI, lxxxii—lxxxvi).

TALK not of seventy years as age ; in seven

I have seen more changes, down from monarchs to  
 The humblest individual under heaven,

Than might suffice a moderate century through.  
 I knew that nought was lasting, but now even

Change grows too changeable, without being new :  
 Nought's permanent among the human race,  
 Except the Whigs *not* getting into place.

I have seen Napoleon, who seem'd quite a Jupiter,

Shrink to a Saturn. I have seen a Duke 10  
 (No matter which) turn politician stupider,  
 If that can well be, than his wooden look.

But it is time that I should hoist my 'blue Peter,'  
 And sail for a new theme:—I have seen—and  
 shook  
 To see it—the king hiss'd, and then caress'd;  
 But don't pretend to settle which was best.

I have seen the Landholders without a rap—  
 I have seen Joanna Southcote—I have seen  
 The House of Commons turn'd to a tax-trap—  
 I have seen that sad affair of the late Queen— 20  
 I have seen crowns worn instead of a fool's cap—  
 I have seen a Congress doing all that 's mean—  
 I have seen some nations, like o'erloaded asses,  
 Kick off their burthens—meaning the high classes.

I have seen small poets, and great prozers, and  
 Interminable—not eternal—speakers—  
 I have seen the funds at war with house and land—  
 I have seen the country gentlemen turn squeakers—  
 I have seen the people ridden o'er, like sand,  
 By slaves on horseback—I have seen malt liquors  
 Exchanged for 'thin potations' by John Bull— 31  
 I have seen John half detect himself a fool—

But '*carpe diem*,' Juan, '*carpe, carpe!*'  
 To-morrow sees another race as gay  
 And transient, and devour'd by the same harpy.  
 'Life 's a poor player,'—then 'play out the  
 play,  
 Ye villains!' and above all keep a sharp eye  
 Much less on what you do than what you say:  
 Be hypocritical, be cautious, be  
 Not what you seem, but always what you see. 40



## A RUINED ABBEY

(CANTO XIII, lvi—lxiv).

It stood embosom'd in a happy valley,  
 Crown'd by high woodlands, where the Druid oak  
 Stood, like Caractacus, in act to rally  
 His host, with broad arms 'gainst the thunderstroke;  
 And from beneath his boughs were seen to sally  
 The dappled foresters; as day awoke,  
 The branching stag swept down with all his herd,  
 To quaff a brook which murmur'd like a bird.

Before the mansion lay a lucid lake,  
 Broad as transparent, deep, and freshly fed 10  
 By a river, which its soften'd way did take  
 In currents through the calmer water spread  
 Around: the wildfowl nestled in the brake  
 And sedges, brooding in their liquid bed:  
 The woods sloped downwards to its brink, and stood  
 With their green faces fix'd upon the flood.

Its outlet dash'd into a deep cascade,  
 Sparkling with foam, until again subsiding,  
 Its shriller echoes—like an infant made  
 Quiet—sank into softer ripples, gliding 20  
 Into a rivulet: and thus allay'd,  
 Pursued its course, now gleaming, and now hiding  
 Its windings through the woods; now clear, now blue,  
 According as the skies their shadows threw.

A glorious remnant of the Gothic pile  
 (While yet the church was Rome's) stood half apart  
 In a grand arch, which once screen'd many an aisle.  
 These last had disappear'd—a loss to art:  
 The first yet frown'd superbly o'er the soil,  
 And kindled feelings in the roughest heart, 30  
 Which mourn'd the power of time's or tempest's march,  
 In gazing on that venerable arch.



Within a niche, nigh to its pinnacle,  
Twelve saints had once stood sanctified in stone ;  
But these had fallen, not when the friars fell,  
But in the war which struck Charles from his  
throne,  
When each house was a fortalice—as tell  
The annals of full many a line undone,—  
The gallant cavaliers, who fought in vain  
For those who knew not to resign or reign. 40

But in a higher niche, alone, but crown'd,  
The Virgin-Mother of the God-born Child,  
With her Son in her blessed arms, look'd round,  
Spared by some chance when all beside was spoil'd ;  
She made the earth below seem holy ground.  
This may be superstition, weak or wild ;  
But even the faintest relics of a shrine  
Of any worship wake some thoughts divine.

A mighty window, hollow in the centre,  
Shorn of its glass of thousand colourings, 50  
Through which the deepen'd glories once could enter,  
Streaming from off the sun like seraph's wings,  
Now yawns all desolate : now loud, now fainter,  
The gale sweeps through its fretwork, and oft  
sings  
The owl his anthem, where the silenced quire  
Lie with their hallelujahs quench'd like fire.

But in the noontide of the moon, and when  
The wind is winged from one point of heaven,  
There moans a strange unearthly sound, which then  
Is musical—a dying accent driven 60  
Through the huge arch, which soars and sinks again.  
Some deem it but the distant echo given  
Back to the night wind by the waterfall,  
And harmonised by the old choral wall :

Others, that some original shape, or form

Shaped by decay perchance, hath given the power  
(Though less than that of Memnon's statue, warm

In Egypt's rays, to harp at a fix'd hour)

To this grey ruin, with a voice to charm,

Sad, but serene, it sweeps o'er tree or tower ; 70

The cause I know not, nor can solve ; but such

The fact :--I've heard it,—once perhaps too much.

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